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WELCOME CHRISTMAS 2022

Charles II may have been invited back to rule, but his reign was far from a walk in the park, as we explore in this month's Essential Guide

In 1660, just over 11 years after the execution of his father, Charles I, and the formation of an English republic, the unthinkable happened and **the exiled Charles II was invited to return home and take his throne as king of England**. Charles went on to rule for 25 years but his reign was far from easy, and it wasn't long before issues with parliament began to rear their heads once more. For this month's Essential Guide, we've enlisted the help of award-winning historian Dr Clare Jackson to **explore how the restoration of the monarchy came about, and what life was like under the rule of the Merry Monarch** – from the king's many mistresses, to foreign affairs, religion and assassination plots. Start your journey on page 27.

Elsewhere, ahead of a new BBC Two series, **we revisit a landmark year in the life of Victorian explorer, writer and photographer Isabella Bird**, a woman who defied convention to travel around the US, where she climbed volcanoes, explored the Rocky Mountains and refused to ride sidesaddle! (*page 59*). **We also look at how young people lived – and survived – in the Middle Ages with an A–Z of medieval childhood** (*page 50*), and ask how the world might have looked had Napoleon defeated Russia in 1812 (*page 64*).

Plus, **we'll also be investigating some of history's most intriguing questions**, including what was the first music to be performed in space? And when did we stop using trial by combat? Find out the answers from page 67.

Happy Christmas to all our readers!

Charlotte Hodgman
Editor

THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

£800k
The annual allowance granted to George II by Prime Minister Robert Walpole

14,000
The height (in feet) at which Amelia Earhart broke her first altitude record, in 1922

600,000
The number of troops Napoleon sent into Russia in 1812 – only 100,000 returned

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USPS Identification Statement
BBC History Revealed (ISSN 2632-6930) (USPS 022-450) Christmas 2022 is published 13 times a year (monthly, with a Christmas issue in December) by Immediate Media Company London Limited, Vineyard House, 44 Brook Green, Hammersmith, London, W6 7BT, UK. Distributed in the US by NPS Media Group, 2 Enterprise Drive, Suite 420, Shelton, CT 06484. Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *BBC History Revealed*, PO Box 401, Williamsport, PA 17703, USA

COVER FIGURES, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: CHARLES II, SAMUEL PEPYS, OLIVER CROMWELL, LOUISE DE KÉROUALLE, NELL GWYN - ALAMY X4, GETTY IMAGES X6, ON THIS PAGE: ALAMY X1, JENI NOTT X1

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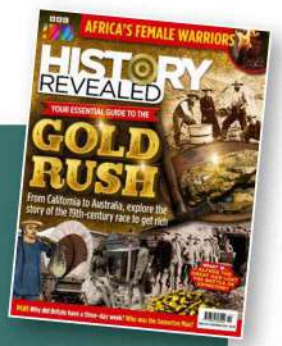

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SNAPSHOTS

c1955 CHRISTMAS DOWN UNDER

The first recorded Christmas celebrations in Australia took place in 1788 among a group of convicts in New South Wales, and since then, the Aussies have largely taken their cue from British and American traditions. However, some distinctly Antipodean pastimes have emerged. Coinciding with summer in the southern hemisphere (as indicated by the attire worn by the children shown here), it is not unusual to see Father Christmas ditching his suit for swimming shorts and a surfboard, or spot groups of revellers heading to the beach to feast on barbecued turkey.

GETTY IMAGES

SNAPSHOTS

c1950
RISING STAR

Of the Russian capital's 'Seven Sisters' – a family of skyscrapers constructed in the Stalinist style between 1947 and 1953 – Moscow State University's main building is perhaps the most striking. Towering over the crest of the Sparrow Hills, the structure stands at an impressive 240 metres (787ft) in height, making it the tallest existing university building in the world. The skyscraper was the brainchild of architect Lev Rudnev, who was awarded the commission after an earlier design was deemed to be vulnerable to landslides. Largely constructed using prisoners from the Soviet gulag system, its distinctive form would go on to influence a host of buildings across the former Eastern Bloc, most notably Warsaw's Palace of Culture and Science.

GETTY IMAGES

SNAPSHOTS

1924 PINCHBAIT

In times gone by, the Inuit peoples of the Arctic Circle depended on the hunter-gatherer tradition in order to survive. Living in freezing temperatures and with plant agriculture all but impossible, families mostly ate a protein-rich diet of meat and fish, with very little in the way of carbohydrates. The task of sourcing food was mainly the preserve of men and boys, but as this picture of an Inuit mother out 'crabbing' shows, it was not a purely male role. Today, increasing levels of urbanisation and westernisation mean that few Inuit people choose to stick to such diets exclusively, but traditions like hunting and fishing remain an important part of their cultural identity.

GETTY IMAGES

THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH...

RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

MAIN: **Rescuers sift through the wreckage at Pantglas Junior School**

RIGHT: **An aerial view of Aberfan shows the extent of the coal slip**

FAR RIGHT: **The exact moment of the tragedy is forever remembered by this broken timepiece**

ABERFAN DISASTER OBJECTS GO ON PUBLIC DISPLAY

The St Fagans National Museum of History in Cardiff has opened a new display of items from the Aberfan disaster. On 21 October 1966, a coal spoil tip on the mountainside overlooking the mining village of Aberfan collapsed and caused a landslide, engulfing Pantglas Junior School and claiming the lives of 116 children and 28 adults. Objects recovered from the school, including a clock frozen at 9.13am – the moment the disaster struck – have been donated by survivors. They hope the display will become a permanent reminder of the tragedy and of Aberfan's resilience.

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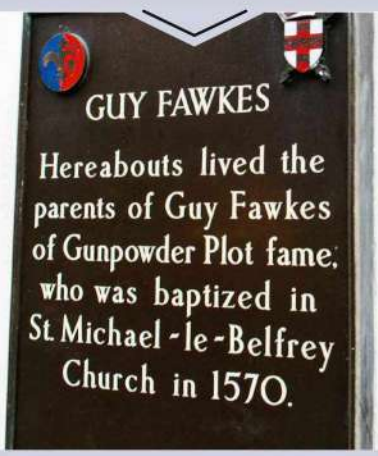
PUB TO OPEN ON SITE OF FAWKES HOME

A shop unit located on the site of Guy Fawkes's family home is set to become a pub honouring the notorious conspirator's name. The empty premises, situated on Stonegate in York city centre, has been acquired by local businesses Pivovar and Thornbridge Brewery, which have announced their intentions to open a venue named Fawkes and The Tiger. Although the original building – said to be where the gunpowder plotter's parents lived at the time of his birth – has long been demolished, a nearby plaque (*pictured below*) indicates the site's historical significance.


GUY FAWKES
Hereabouts lived the parents of Guy Fawkes of Gunpowder Plot fame, who was baptized in St Michael-le-Belfrey Church in 1570.

PONTE VECCHIO TO BE GIVEN NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Florence's oldest bridge is set to be restored for the first time in its 677-year history. The upcoming works will not only ensure that the structure of the Ponte Vecchio remains safe and watertight (including its wooden struts, *pictured right*), but will also see its heraldic decoration revived. The bridge has already survived several threats to its existence, including World War II, when it was spared from destruction by German troops retreating from Florence.

SPANISH CIVIL WAR MUSEUM AIMS TO TACKLE TABOOS

A new virtual museum devoted to the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) has been launched online amid continuing controversy over the conflict's legacy in modern Spain. The resource, located at *vscw.ca*, enables visitors to view a wide range of objects relating to the war, as well as eyewitness testimonies. Researchers who have worked on the project hope that the website will help tackle taboos about the conflict – described as a "central event of 20th-century history" – and encourage ordinary people to share their own stories.

£10,500

The amount paid at auction (five times the estimate) for a police ledger containing a mugshot of suffragette Alice Wheeldon, convicted in 1917 of plotting to kill Prime Minister David Lloyd George

BLACK DEATH 'ALTERED HUMAN GENOME'

DNA analysis of medieval skeletons has found that people who were born with a specific set of genetic mutations were 40 per cent more likely to survive the Black Death. Scientists were able to confirm the results by carrying out experiments on modern blood samples, which showed that people with the same mutations today would have a better chance of fighting off the plague bacterium *Yersinia pestis* than those without them. Although these 'helpful' mutations are now more common within the population due to being passed down by plague survivors, they are also linked to conditions such as Crohn's disease.

Alfred Dreyfus is framed for treason

Words: Danny Bird

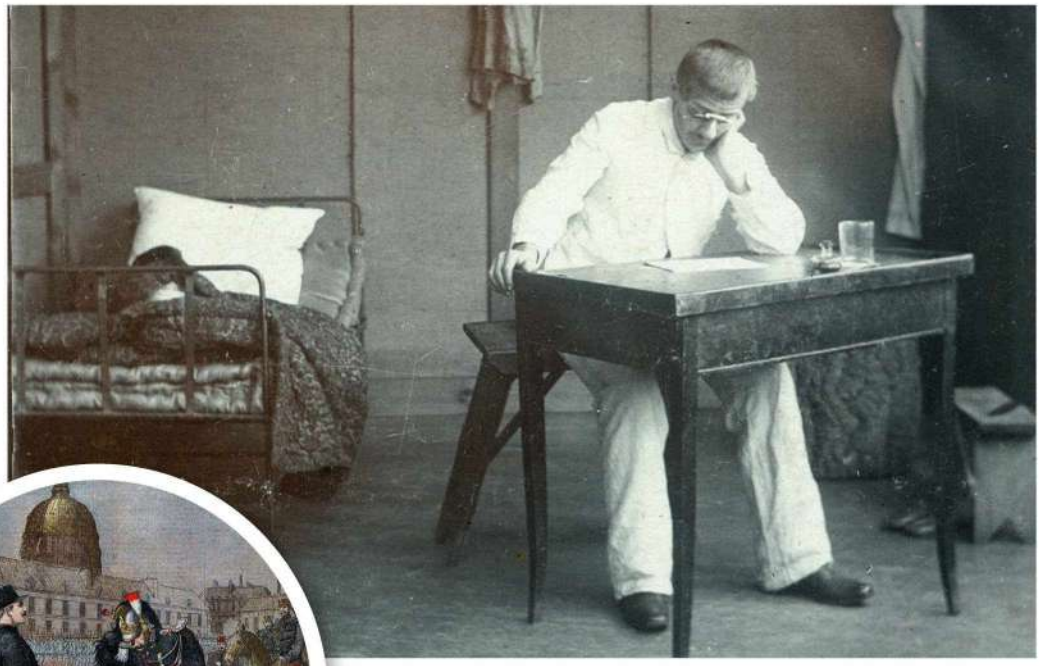
On 22 December 1894, after a four-day trial at the Cherche-Midi prison in Paris, seven judges unanimously convicted Alfred Dreyfus, an artillery officer, of collusion with a foreign power. Born in Mulhouse, Alsace, Dreyfus was a patriotic and independently wealthy soldier of Jewish heritage. He was sentenced to the harshest penalty under French law – that of permanent exile in a walled fortification.

The discovery, three months earlier, of a ripped-up, handwritten note – the *bordereau* – in a wastebasket by a French intelligence agent operating inside the German Embassy, had shocked the nation. Ever since Germany's annexation of France's easternmost regions, Alsace and Lorraine, in 1871, there had been deep mistrust between Paris and Berlin. The note, addressed to the German military attaché, served to validate this paranoia. Its contents divulged information on changes to French artillery regulations, the outcome of a weapons test and plans to conquer Madagascar.

Suspicion pointed to a spy on France's general staff, with Dreyfus soon identified as the culprit. His upbringing in a part of France long exposed to Germanic influences, as well as his Jewish ancestry, singled him out as an anomaly in a military culture rife with anti-Semitism and hungry to avenge the defeat of 1871.

EXILE AND CONSPIRACY

On 5 January 1895, two weeks after his conviction, Dreyfus was subjected to a humiliating "degradation" on the courtyard of the École Militaire.



ABOVE: **After being convicted, Alfred Dreyfus was subjected to a "degradation", during which his sword was snapped over a warrant officer's knee**

MAIN: **Dreyfus was subsequently imprisoned on Devil's Island, French Guiana, where he endured hellish conditions**

His sword was snapped across the knee of a towering warrant officer, and his epaulettes and stripes were unceremoniously torn from his uniform. Baying crowds screamed "Judas!" and "Death to the Jews!", but Dreyfus remained stoic throughout the ordeal, exclaiming: "Innocent! Innocent! Vive la France! Long live the Army!" before being marched off.

That April, he arrived on Devil's Island, a former leper colony off French Guiana, to begin his sentence. There, he endured appalling mistreatment. Imprisoned within a purpose-built stone hut measuring a mere 4 x 4 metres, Dreyfus was fed rotting pork, manacled to his bed at night, and had his view of the sea obstructed by a palisade. Guards were ordered not to interact with him, and his ability to speak languished.

Back in France, events were taking a surprising turn. Graphology had been used to convict Dreyfus, with alleged "experts" confirming a match between his handwriting with that on the *bordereau*. However, in July 1896, Lieutenant Colonel Georges Picquart, the army's new intelligence chief, discovered that the handwriting was not Dreyfus's at all. Rather, it belonged to a disgruntled officer, Major Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy – whose hand was known to Picquart from a letter intercepted that spring. Suddenly, his investigation was killed in its tracks and Picquart redeployed to French Tunisia.

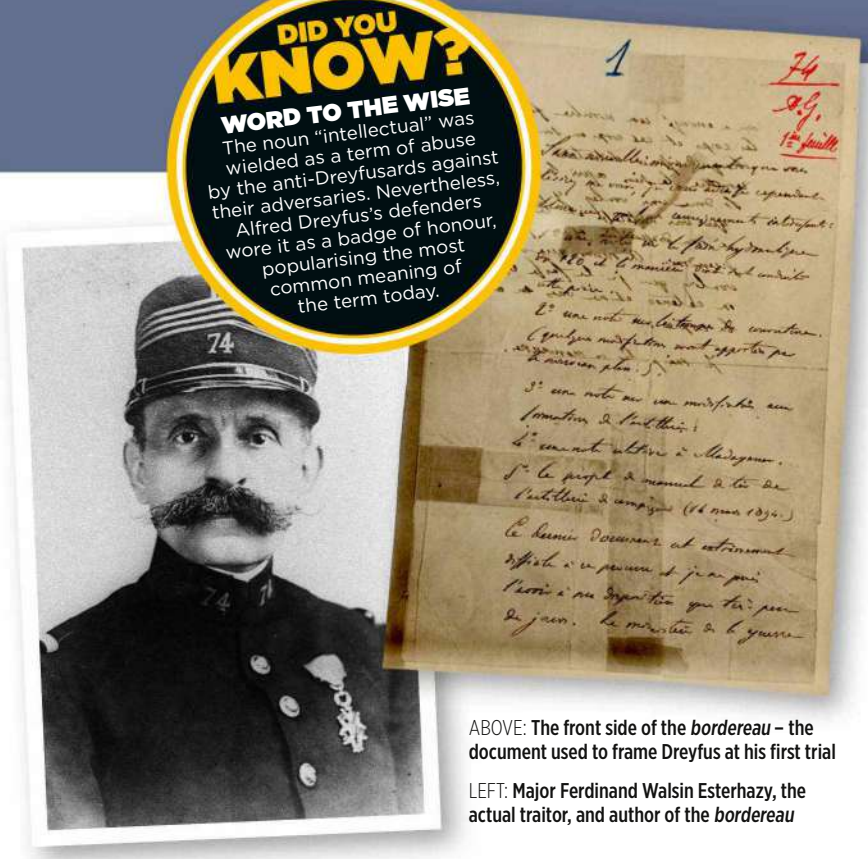
Always certain of his innocence, Dreyfus's wife, Lucie, and brother, Mathieu, waged a tireless campaign to clear his name. In 1897, Esterhazy's banker notified Auguste Scheurer-Kestner, vice-president of the French Senate, upon

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X5

DID YOU KNOW?

WORD TO THE WISE

The noun "intellectual" was wielded as a term of abuse by the anti-Dreyfusards against their adversaries. Nevertheless, Alfred Dreyfus's defenders wore it as a badge of honour, popularising the most common meaning of the term today.



ABOVE: **The front side of the *bordereau* – the document used to frame Dreyfus at his first trial**

LEFT: **Major Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy, the actual traitor, and author of the *bordereau***

"Under arrest, Henry slashed his throat with a razorblade and became an instant martyr for the anti-Dreyfusards"

recognising his client's handwriting on one of Mathieu's public facsimiles of the *bordereau*. The politician, already aware of Esterhazy's treachery, lodged a complaint with the minister of war and a court-martial ensued. Esterhazy was acquitted in January 1898 and fled across the English Channel, while anti-Semitic riots erupted in several French cities.

A NATIONAL CRISIS

By now, the imbroglio was being referred to as the "Dreyfus affair". Days after Esterhazy's acquittal, Émile Zola published an open letter, "*J'Accuse…!*", on the front page of *L'Aurore* (The Dawn). In it, the famed novelist denounced the army's top brass for conspiring to scapegoat Dreyfus to protect Esterhazy. Zola also warned that the anti-Semitism fuelling the affair would "destroy the freedom-loving France of the Rights of Man" if not confronted.

Later that year, Hubert-Joseph Henry, a lieutenant colonel, was found to have doctored evidence to further incriminate Dreyfus. Under arrest, Henry slashed his throat with a razorblade and became an instant martyr for the anti-Dreyfusards. Édouard Drumont's newspaper, *La Libre Parole* (Free Speech), launched a petition to raise funds for a monument, inviting messages from contributors. These were full of dark, anti-Semitic fantasies, with many calling for a general extermination.

Finally, in 1899, a retrial took place in Rennes, France. It was an open secret that nationalists were plotting a coup should Dreyfus be acquitted. With the threat of civil war looming, he was reconvicted, but on a reduced sentence of 10 years' imprisonment due to "extenuating circumstances" – unheard of for a charge of treason.

It would take another seven years before he was fully exonerated, reinstated to the army and appointed to the Legion of Honour. He fought for France in World War I and died in 1935, aged 75. In September 1995, the French Army finally admitted that Dreyfus had been the victim of a military conspiracy.

BBC

EVERY MONTH THROUGHOUT 2022, WE'LL BE COMMEMORATING THE BBC'S 100TH BIRTHDAY WITH A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE…

25 December 1977

ERIC AND ERNIE SET THE RECORD

Already beloved by the British public, Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise reach new heights of success when the 1977 edition of the *Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show* – a festive television staple since 1969 – is watched by a record 28 million viewers. Featuring guest stars such as Elton John and *The Good Life*'s Penelope Keith (*pictured, centre*), the episode still remains the most-watched comedy programme in British television history.

OTHER ANNIVERSARIES

A LOOK BACK AT OTHER EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN DECEMBER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

27 December 1836

BRITAIN'S DEADLIEST AVALANCHE

A huge accumulation of snow cascades down a chalk cliff in the town of Lewes, East Sussex, killing eight people and destroying a row of cottages. The tragedy – which remains the deadliest avalanche in recorded British history – is today commemorated in the name of a pub, The Snowdrop Inn, which was built on the disaster site in 1840.

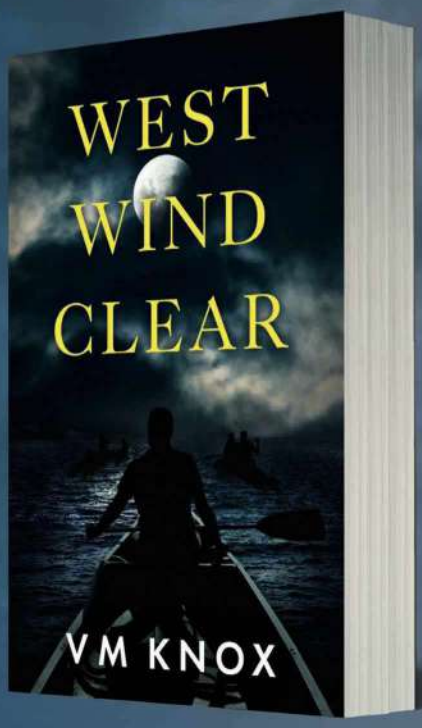
31 December 1759

A LOVELY DAY FOR A GUINNESS

Arthur Guinness (*pictured left*) signs a 9,000-year lease on St James's Gate Brewery in Dublin for £45 per annum. The site becomes home to the production of a stout bearing its owner's surname. Ten years later, Guinness starts exporting the beverage to Great Britain.

Espionage, Deception and the Secret Pacific War

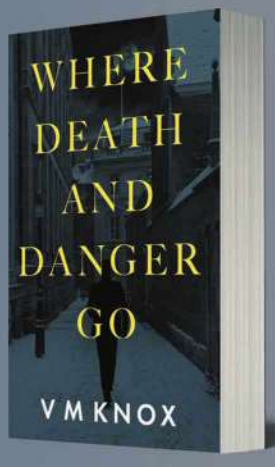
Discover the 4th and latest adventure in this WW2 Series



By late 1941, the Pacific is a very different place and Japan threatens the security of the region. As Clement is preparing to return to Britain from Australia, he is seconded to lead a small guerrilla force to Singapore where he is to rescue an important man who is carrying a vital secret. After the apparent suicide of one of his team, Clement becomes suspicious that an enemy spy is among them; one who will kill to safeguard his identity.

In Spite of All Terror is the first in a series of crime thrillers by V M Knox that mix historical fact, crime fiction and superb characterisation. Set in September 1940, when Britain stood alone against an imminent Nazi invasion, Reverend Clement Wisdom and other men from the restricted occupations, were called to join the covert Auxiliary Units. Following the murders of several of Clement's team, he finds himself embroiled in the murky world of espionage where things are never what they seem.

If Necessary Alone is the second thriller in this World War II crime series. Clement Wisdom, now a Major in Special Duties Branch, Secret Intelligence Service, is sent to remote Caithness to investigate illicit encrypted radio transmissions. As soon as he arrives there, an out-station wireless operator is found brutally murdered and Clement becomes entangled in a web of death and silence. Alone, and in the bitter Scottish winter, Clement must stay one step ahead of a killer if he is to remain alive.



Where Death and Danger Go is set in the dark days of 1941. Britain fights on alone. Invasion and fear hang in the air. On a winter's night, a German spy parachutes into Cambridgeshire as another man is murdered nearby. Is he another enemy spy or has he been sent to his death? Either way, a killer lurks. Major Clement Wisdom of the SIS is sent to investigate and discovers a web of conspiracy where kidnap, murder and revenge threaten his life and the safety of the nation.

All four books can be purchased from online booksellers, Waterstones and independent book shops

THE HISTORY DETECTIVE

DR NELL DARBY INVESTIGATES COLD CASES FROM THE ARCHIVES

CASE #004

THE STRANGE CASE OF 'MR FRANCIS'

DR NELL DARBY REVEALS HOW A BUNGLED NINE-YEAR SEARCH TO TRACK DOWN A MURDERER'S REAL NAME ENABLED HIM TO EVADE JUSTICE

In a case of confused identities, when Frances Saunders was murdered in Peckham in 1897 by her lover, the couple was described in the press as Mr and Mrs Francis. Although Frances' real identity was soon established when her estranged husband identified her body, it took another nine years for police to work out who her suspected killer really was – but the delay enabled him to escape justice.

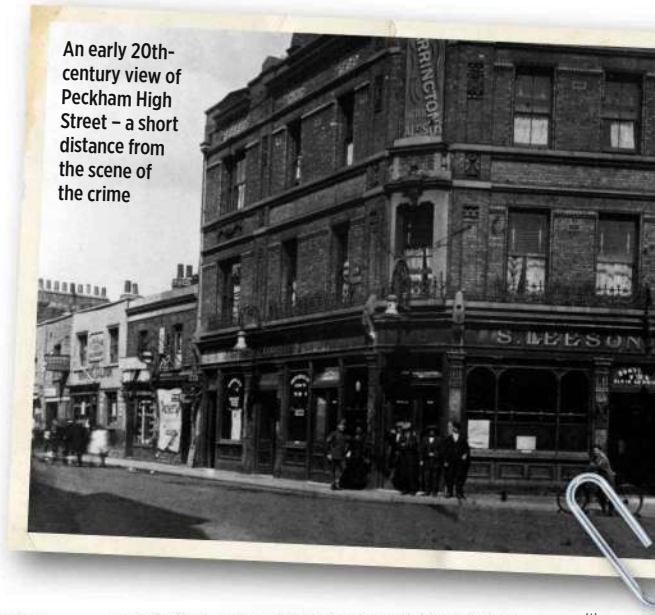
Frances was only 31 years old, but had lived a chequered life. Married at 18 to market gardener William Saunders, she was the mother of three young children, and it seems that as she approached her thirties, she was looking for a bit of excitement. She had affairs, she drank, and she wasn't good with money. Her marriage failed, and William soon decided that she was leading such a dissolute life that he cut off her agreed maintenance.

An artist's impression of Frances Saunders printed in an edition of the *Weekly Dispatch*, in which she was incorrectly named 'Mrs Francis'

She took him to court and William was ordered to pay, albeit a reduced sum; but Frances promptly absconded with one of their two sons.

She then moved in with another man in Peckham. Frances' new partner was a career burglar, but one who was content to sit back and let his girlfriend prostitute herself to pay their rent – indeed, locals said Frances would bring men back to their house on Cator Street while her boyfriend was present. She was unable, however, to bring sufficient money in, and the night she was killed, neighbours heard an argument between the couple over their finances, with Frances shouting that if she could find his burglary equipment, she would happily take it to a police station and report his crimes.

Her partner waited until she and her son were asleep, and then attacked her with a hatchet. Afterwards, he calmly asked a neighbour to look after the child, claiming that Frances had had to go away. It was another three days before anyone thought to investigate where Frances was, giving her errant boyfriend ample time to escape before her body was finally found.



An early 20th-century view of Peckham High Street – a short distance from the scene of the crime

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Initial reports in 1897 make it clear that the police were unsure of the identity of Frances' suspected killer. They had been known as Mr and Mrs Francis, but these obviously weren't their real names. He was known to also go by the name of Vincent, yet Frances referred to him as 'Uncle Ben'. There was an uncorroborated sighting of him near the docks, but nothing else.

Time moved on, and William Saunders soon remarried; he and his second wife would bring up Frances' three children. Only in 1906, after many people had forgotten about Frances and her fate, did the police release new information. They had established that her killer had other pseudonyms, including Benjamin Ollaway and Mr Tompkinson – but his real name was Joseph Tomblin. He was 5ft 6in, and had a ginger moustache or beard, a bald head, and a sunken nose. He would now be 57 years old.

The description of him was certainly quite detailed, but despite this, there is no evidence that Tomblin was ever caught. The delay in finding Frances' body, and her lover's shady life, enabled him to give the Victorian and Edwardian police the slip.

DR NELL DARBY is a crime historian and writer, and the presenter of the CBS Reality series *Murder by the Sea*. Her latest book is *Sister Sleuths: Female Detectives in Britain* (Pen & Sword History, 2021)

LISTEN

BBC RADIO 3

An episode of BBC Radio 3's *Arts & Ideas* podcast examines the reality of street life in Victorian cities: *bbc.in/3S8UKIw*

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The Soviet Union

Words: Danny Bird

WHAT WAS THE SOVIET UNION AND HOW DID IT COME TO EXIST?

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), more commonly known as the Soviet Union, was a vast country that spanned much of northern Eurasia. For most of its existence during the 20th century, it was a multinational federation of 15 Union Republics and numerous subdivisions, each based on ethnicity and culture. The largest by far was Russia, where the Soviet capital, Moscow, was located. As a self-proclaimed "socialist state", the Soviet Union became the template for other such countries and served as the fulcrum for communism throughout the world.

The origins of the Soviet Union lay in the October Revolution of 1917 when Marxist leader, Vladimir Lenin, and his Bolshevik Party seized power in Petrograd (now St Petersburg). They named their new state the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (RSFSR), in honour of the organisations – the *soviets* (councils) – convened by workers, peasants and soldiers during the 1905 and 1917 revolutions.

Lenin deduced that Russia would be the tinderbox of an imminent worldwide socialist revolution, which would mark the demise of capitalism. However, the Russian empire's implosion into civil war proved a greater priority, as 'Reds' (Bolsheviks and other radical leftists) and 'Whites' (groups loyal to Russia's deposed tsar) fought each other across its immense terrain.

The Bolsheviks conspired to establish kindred regimes in the former empire's newly independent nations. By 1922, Soviet republics had been installed in Ukraine, Belorussia and the Transcaucasian Federation (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan). On 30 December, delegations from these republics and Russia ratified a treaty that unified them as the Soviet Union.

HOW WAS IT GOVERNED?

In practice, the Soviet Union was a highly centralised state, with the Communist Party (which the Bolsheviks renamed themselves in 1918), controlling all aspects of Soviet politics, economics and culture. Its ideology was Marxism-Leninism, based on an adaptation by Lenin of Marxist theory to suit Russia's specific circumstances, through which it aspired to realise a communist utopia. Leadership was exercised collectively between state officials, though the party's leader, the general secretary, acted as *de facto* head of state.

Marxism-Leninism rejected parliamentary democracy, considering it rigged to serve capitalist interests.

The hammer and sickle, seen held aloft by the figures in this Soviet-era statue, symbolised unity between the working class and the peasantry

Joseph Stalin oversaw industrialisation, state terror and the Soviet Union's transformation into a superpower

Instead, the Supreme Soviet became the Union's chief law-making institution in 1936, electing its collective leadership and assembling representatives of the Union's nationalities at state level. Effectively, though, it functioned simply to rubberstamp party policy.

WHAT WAS STALIN'S IMPACT ON THE SOVIET UNION?

Following Lenin's death in 1924, a power struggle convulsed the party from which Joseph Stalin, a Georgian Bolshevik, triumphed. Moving to demonise his rival, Leon Trotsky, he inaugurated a cult of personality and replaced Moscow's commitment to world revolution with "socialism in one country".

Through a series of five-year plans, Stalin sought to rapidly industrialise the Soviet Union and collectivise agriculture, bringing private farms under state control. These policies inflicted enormous suffering across the Union – notably in Ukraine, where a human-made famine, the Holodomor, killed up to 4 million people between 1932 and 1933. Stalin then launched the Great Purge in 1936, in the paranoid belief that officials in the regime were conspiring to supplant him. Old Bolsheviks were subjected to show trials, tortured into confessing, and summarily executed. Others vanished into a network of forced labour camps, known as gulags. His grip on power secured, Stalin ended the carnage in 1938.

WHAT WAS THE SOVIETS' ROLE IN WORLD WAR II?

In 1939, Stalin baffled communists around the world by signing a non-aggression pact with his ideological foe, Adolf Hitler. Together, they divided Poland, while the Soviet Union later annexed the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in 1940. Nevertheless, on 22 June 1941, Hitler launched

GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X1

Operation Barbarossa, his long-planned invasion of the Soviet Union. The speed of the German advance shocked Soviet leaders as vast swathes of territory were lost. Leningrad (formerly known as Petrograd) was encircled and endured a brutal siege lasting over two years. Moscow evaded capture. The turning point was the battle of Stalingrad, with Soviet soldiers repelling the Germans and finally reaching Berlin in April 1945. Losing over 27 million military personnel and civilians, the war proved a major formative experience for the Soviets.

ABOVE LEFT: **The defeat of Nazi Germany is proclaimed by a Soviet soldier raising the 'banner of victory' over the Reichstag**

ABOVE CENTRE: **Mikhail Gorbachev aimed to reform the Soviet Union, but ended up being its last leader**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Yuri Gagarin's 1961 orbit of Earth was a triumph for Soviet science**

HOW DID THE SOVIET UNION EVOLVE DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY?

After 1945 the Soviet Union emerged as a global superpower, which led to a nuclear arms race unfolding against the US. Meanwhile, Moscow nurtured socialist regimes across eastern Europe and welcomed nations like China and Cuba into the fold.

Stalin's crimes were denounced by his successor, Nikita Khrushchev, after the dictator's death in 1953. Nonetheless, anti-Moscow uprisings in East Germany, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were suppressed in the ensuing decades.

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik 1*, the first artificial satellite, followed by the first human being in outer space, Yuri Gagarin, in 1961. It was a coup for the Soviets in the Space Race and state propaganda acclaimed communist innovation and science.

Yet the 1970s saw popular support for Marxism-Leninism wane as the promise of the Khrushchev years soured during Leonid Brezhnev's tenure. Long queues for dwindling consumer products and the Soviets' international status as a pariah, brought by the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, took their toll.

WHY DID IT COLLAPSE?

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became leader. The first general secretary born after the October Revolution, he introduced a series of reforms designed to rejuvenate the Soviet Union: *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (reconstruction). Ironically, these policies enabled long-repressed grievances against Moscow to spill out. In 1986, a disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, in Ukraine, dealt a heavy blow to Soviet probity. Belarus, hardest hit by the fallout, felt aggrieved that Moscow could have so recklessly underestimated such awesome technology. From Poland to Romania, Soviet-backed regimes toppled in 1989, and Moscow withdrew its forces.

> "Old Bolsheviks were subjected to show trials, tortured into confessing, and summarily executed"

Ukraine has witnessed the destruction of Soviet-era monuments, such as this statue of Lenin, since Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014

By 1990, Gorbachev's reforms were yielding unintended consequences closer to home. Nationalism stirred in the Union Republics, with Lithuania becoming the first to declare independence in March. The other Baltic states soon followed suit.

Communist Party hardliners staged a coup in August 1991, hoping to prevent total collapse, but thousands of Muscovites thwarted its progress. Ukraine broke away later that month, and, in December, Russia denounced the 1922 Union Treaty and quit the Soviet Union. Gorbachev resigned via a televised address on 25 December and the Supreme Soviet dissolved the Soviet Union the following day.

WHAT IS THE SOVIET UNION'S LEGACY TODAY?

Recently, Russian president Vladimir Putin has blamed Lenin for implanting "artificial" national identities in lands that were long under Russia's yoke. He has described the Soviet collapse as a "genuine tragedy" for Russia and consistently speaks of protecting "ethnic Russians" living across the former Soviet Union.

In 2014, Moscow annexed Crimea when Ukraine made its aspirations for EU and Nato membership known. This year (2022) saw an escalation of the invasion, with Putin denying Ukraine's right to statehood while curtailing dissent in Russia. The Soviet Union's legacy is still very much playing out.

WATCH

BBC iPlayer

Russia 1985–1999: TraumaZone, a series of films by Adam Curtis that explore what it felt like to live through the USSR's collapse and aftermath, is now available to watch on BBC iPlayer: *bbc.in/3DBI2gh*

Amelia Earhart: pilot extraordinaire

A fearless flyer who broke multiple aviation records, Amelia Earhart found freedom above the clouds and showed the world what women could do. But how did she reach such heights in the first place?

While at a California air show, a 23-year-old Amelia Earhart arranged to have her first ride in an airplane – and the effect of the experience on 28 December 1920, she later recalled, was immediate. "By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground, I knew I had to fly." Within six months, she started lessons with instructor Anita 'Neta' Snook and bought a Kinner Airster, a bright-yellow biplane dubbed *The Canary*. With it, she soon broke the women's altitude record with a flight at 14,000 feet.

Amelia Mary Earhart, born 24 July 1897 in Atchison, Kansas, had always been adventurous and preferred typically boyish pursuits than what was expected of young girls: spending days with her sister Muriel climbing trees, hunting rats and once constructing a "roller coaster" (a ramp off the toolshed roof, which ended with an impressive crash). She adapted as her family moved around a lot amidst financial issues, and to a lifelong sinus condition picked up while a nurse's aide caring for World War I soldiers and Spanish Flu patients in Canada.

RAPID ASCENT TO FAME

Flying, however, became her life's passion and purpose: with her hair cropped short to fit the aviator look, Earhart took to the skies whenever she could and eagerly promoted the still-nascent pastime. By 1928, she had come to the attention of those preparing the first flight for a woman across the Atlantic, although this would not be like Charles Lindbergh the previous year as she would not be alone or even be the pilot. For the voyage on 17 June 1928, from Newfoundland to Wales, she sat behind two men as a passenger.

Despite declaring herself as useful as a "sack of potatoes", the flight turned Earhart into an overnight, global celebrity. A book (*20 Hrs. 40 Mins.*) and extensive lecture tour followed thanks to her bulldoggish publicist George P Putnam, whom Earhart married in 1931. Far from a conventional marriage, she demanded their relationship be an equal partnership. Under her own name – and irked whenever called "Mrs Putnam" in a newspaper – she set a new altitude record (18,415 feet), various speed records, and campaigned for greater recognition of female aviators.

Amelia Earhart pictured with her husband and publicist George P Putnam in 1931 – the year that the couple married

Before long, Earhart set her sights on crossing the Atlantic again, but this time as a solo pilot so she could earn her reputation. On 20 May 1932, five years to the day after Lindbergh, she set off in a Lockheed Vega and, 14 hours 56 minutes later, landed in Northern Ireland. Paris, France, had been the target, but bad weather and mechanical problems forced an early landing wherever she could, which turned out to be a farmer's field.

Awarded a gold medal from the National Geographic Society and the Distinguished Flying Cross – the first woman so honoured – Earhart was now the world's most famous female aviator. She wrote another bestselling book, *The Fun of It*; helped found an organisation named the Ninety-Nines to encourage women to take up flying; began a clothing line; edited *Cosmopolitan* magazine; and was appointed an official at the National Aeronautic Association. Of course, she kept flying too. Over the next few years, she made the first solo flight from Hawaii to mainland US, followed by a series of transcontinental trips and other long-distance firsts.

By 1937, Earhart, now 39, was ready to bring an end to her record-breaking feats, but, as she said, "I have a feeling that there is just about one more good flight left in my system, and I hope this trip is it." That trip was the most ambitious yet: circumnavigating the globe. On 1 June, she set off from Miami, Florida, in a modified Lockheed Model 10-E Electra with her navigator Fred Noonan, and headed east. By the time they reached Lae, New Guinea, they had covered 22,00 miles, mostly without incident, and with just 7,000 miles to go.

TRAGEDY AND MYSTERY

The next leg would be the most treacherous: a 2,600-mile hop to a tiny scrap of land in the Pacific called Howland Island. Even though a Coast Guard vessel, *Itasca*, was on hand to maintain radio contact, Earhart encountered cloudy conditions and lost her way. Messages spoke of fuel running out as they desperately looked for *Itasca*. "We are running north and south" was her last-received transmission before she disappeared, on 2 July 1937.

Despite the launch of a goliath search operation, no trace of Earhart, Noonan or their aircraft was ever found. Perhaps unsurprisingly, theories have abounded as to what happened to the duo, from crashing and sinking in the ocean to being captured by the Japanese government.

But it would be a mistake to remember Earhart just for her last flight. Despite the risks, which ultimately claimed her life, she adored flying and went to great efforts to inspire women to take to the skies. "Women must try and do things as men have tried," she once stated. "When they fail, their failure must be but a challenge to others." In 1964, Jerrie Mock would complete what Earhart started by becoming the first woman to fly around the world solo, and taking the same route.

WORDS: JONNY WILKES

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MAIN: Earhart sits in the cockpit of her modified Lockheed Model 10-E Electra shortly before her ill-fated attempt to circumnavigate the globe in 1937

INSET: The pilot poses alongside a young well-wisher ahead of a 1935 flight from Hawaii to California

"Flying became her life's passion and purpose: she took to the skies whenever she could and eagerly promoted the still-nascent pastime"

RIGHT: President Herbert Hoover presents Earhart with the National Geographic Society gold medal following her first solo flight across the Atlantic in 1932. Only a man, Charles Lindbergh, had successfully completed the feat before

FAR RIGHT: Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, seen during the doomed 1937 circumnavigation attempt. Their bodies would never be recovered

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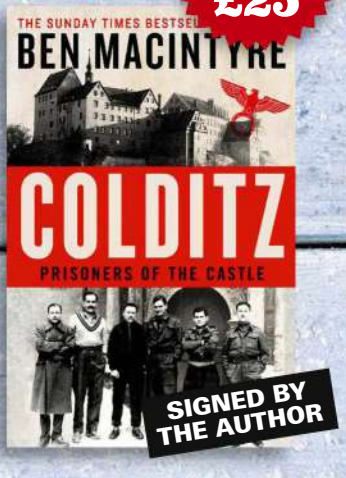

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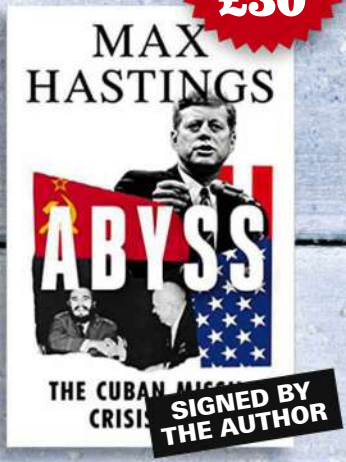

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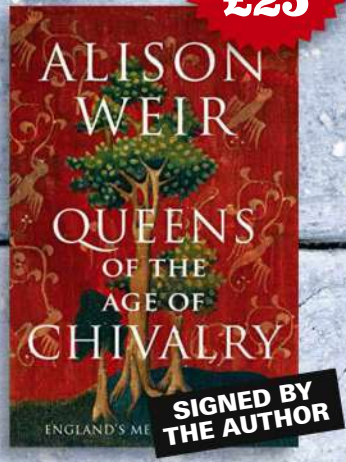

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8 THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT GEORGE II

We share a selection of lesser-known facts about Britain's second Hanoverian king, whose achievements are largely forgotten today

1 HE WAS THE LAST FOREIGN-BORN BRITISH MONARCH

George Augustus was born on 10 November 1683 to George Louis of Brunswick-Lüneberg (later George I) and his wife Sophia Dorothea of Celle in the German city of Hanover. To date, he is the last British monarch not born in Britain. His eventual successor would be his grandson, the future George III, who was born in 1738 in Norfolk House, London. Every monarch since then has been born in or around the capital, except for George VI (r1936–52), who was born at Sandringham.

A portrait of George's father, who became King George I of Great Britain and Ireland in August 1714. His mother, Sophia Dorothea of Celle, is shown below

2 GEORGE'S FIRST LANGUAGE WAS NOT ENGLISH... OR GERMAN

Growing up in Hanover, it is unsurprising that George's first words weren't in English. He was not expected to take the throne of Great Britain – that only came about due to his distant cousin, Queen Anne (*pictured right*), dying without issue and the terms of the 1701 Act of Settlement meaning that his father became king.

But the young George did not learn German first, either. He grew up initially speaking French, seen as the noble language of the Hanoverian court, and started learning German at the age of four. As part of his education he would also go on to be taught English and Italian.

George continued conversing in French, though, and that would be the language of choice for his letters to his wife, Caroline.

A 17th-century view of Hanover – George II's birthplace, and where he spent his formative years. Contrary to what might be assumed, his first language was actually French, not German

GETTY IMAGES X8, ALAMY X2

3 RIVALRY WITH HIS FATHER LED TO TENSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

While he was Prince of Wales, George's residence in London, Leicester House, turned into something of a rival court and the base for a dissident Whig faction opposed to George I's policies. Among them was Sir Robert Walpole. It was Walpole who encouraged a reconciliation between the king and his son, for which he was rewarded with royal favour and a ministerial position. Soon, he would become Britain's first *de facto* prime minister.

But the young George, who had agreed to the reconciliation reluctantly, came to believe that Walpole had tricked him in order to seize power for himself. When George became king, he wanted to dismiss Walpole entirely, but Caroline persuaded him not to. And he was surely thankful for that: Walpole, keen to earn the new king's favour, granted an extravagant civil list (an annual allowance to the Crown) of £800,000.

LEFT: **A young George II, then Prince of Wales, depicted standing in between his wife and his father**

FAR LEFT: **Sir Robert Walpole, seen on the far left with the speaker of the House of Commons, served as prime minister under both George I and George II**

The Georg August University of Göttingen was founded by the king in 1737

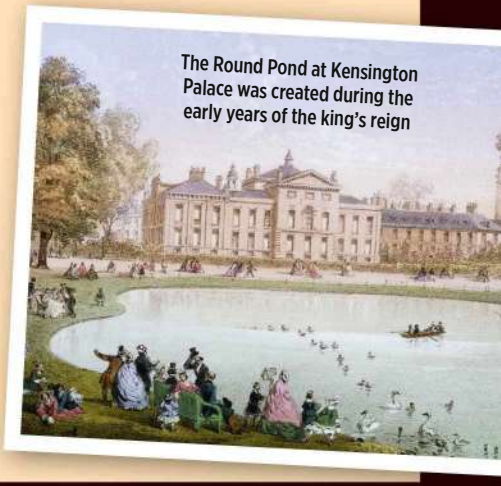
George arranged for a fireworks display to take place in London to mark the signing of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, accompanied by a new piece of music by Handel

4 MUSIC, ARCHITECTURE AND EDUCATION RECEIVED HIS PATRONAGE

In 1737, George founded the first university in the Electorate of Hanover, which still bears his name as the Georg August University of Göttingen, and it was during his reign that the charter for two major US institutions were issued: King's College in New York, which became Columbia, and the College of New Jersey, now called Princeton.

A lover of music, especially the opera, George became the patron for the German composer George Friedrich Handel. For George's coronation in 1727, Handel composed *Zadok the Priest* – as well as three other so-called Coronation Anthems – which has been performed at the anointing of every new monarch since. George then commissioned Handel to compose another suite of music, *Music for the Royal Fireworks*, to celebrate the end of the War of the Austrian Succession and the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748.

Both George and Caroline shared an interest in architecture. Under their direction, the gardens of Kensington Palace and Hyde Park were extended, which included the creation of the Round Pond and the Serpentine lake. Figures such as Charles Bridgeman, a pioneer of naturalistic landscape gardening, and William Kent, the architect involved in the refurbishment of Kensington Palace, would help define the Georgian architectural style.



The Round Pond at Kensington Palace was created during the early years of the king's reign

Prince Frederick's premature death in 1751, aged 44, meant that he never inherited the throne

5 HE LIKED HIS ELABORATE WIGS

While the Georgians are famous for their oversized powdered wigs, George II especially favoured elaborate hairpieces of long, white, curly locks that extended well below his shoulders. The style grew in popularity during his reign as a result. Wigs were a status symbol for the wealthy – the bigger the wig, the richer the owner.

Although, George was not always careful with his headgear: when throwing a tantrum, something he was liable to do, he would kick his hat or stamp on his wig. Once George's grandson, George III, took the throne, wigs began to shrink to match the style seen across the Channel in France.

A young George II sporting an especially long wig. By the late 18th century, hairpieces were shorter and less flamboyant

7 HE DID NOT GET ON WITH HIS HEIR

When George and Caroline came to Britain in 1714, their eldest son Frederick remained in Hanover. They did not meet again for 14 years, when George was king. The 21-year-old Frederick quarrelled with his father and became the leader of a faction at court that opposed the administration. By 1742, the opposition had gained so much popularity that Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole ended up resigning.

George was not alone in his dislike for his son. The opinion was also shared by Caroline, who allegedly said: "There he goes, that wretch, that villain! I wish the ground would open... and sink the monster to the lowest hole in hell."

6 HIS MARRIAGE WENT AHEAD AFTER HE HAD VISITED HIS BRIDE-TO-BE IN DISGUISE

In 1705, George became involved in marriage negotiations with Caroline of Ansbach, the former ward of his aunt. It was a sound match politically, but it seemed that George wished to know something about her first. He visited the Ansbach court under a false name so that he could see what she was like.

Besotted by her charming character, good manners and beauty, he agreed to the marriage contract within a month and the pair were married in Hanover in September 1705.

Despite having several mistresses during his life, it could be said that George was devoted to Caroline. When she became gravely ill with smallpox in 1707, George stayed by her bedside even though that meant he contracted the disease himself.

The king and queen had a son, Frederick, and then five daughters and two more sons, but complications with the final birth in 1724 would eventually lead to her death, when her strangulated bowel burst, in 1737. When she urged George to remarry after she was gone, he reportedly exclaimed: "No! I shall have mistresses!" Indeed, the king never remarried.

A 1716 portrait of Caroline of Ansbach. Despite having several mistresses during their marriage, George II was besotted with his wife until death

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X1

8 HE DOES NOT HAVE A MAJOR MONUMENT CELEBRATING HIS REIGN

George II is buried in the Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey, with only a modest tile bearing his name

George II died on 25 October 1760, aged 76. His eldest son, Frederick, had predeceased him, so his grandson inherited the throne as George III. Despite being largely forgotten today, George II has some considerable achievements to his name, such as being the last reigning British sovereign to personally lead an army when he fought at the battle of Dettingen in 1743.

Crucially, his reign also survived the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, when the 'Young Pretender' Charles Edward Stuart, better known as Bonnie Prince Charlie, invaded England to overthrow the Hanoverian regime.

Yet no grand or magnificent memorial exists for George. Inside Westminster Abbey is a statue of Handel, a recipient of George's patronage, but for the king himself there is nothing other than a small tile on the floor of the Lady Chapel. Below that spot he is buried alongside his wife, Caroline. It was his wish that the sides of their coffins be removed so their remains could mix and be together forevermore.

These facts were partially derived from an episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast with Norman Davies, professor emeritus at the University of London and the author of *George II: Not Just A British Monarch* (Allen Lane, 2021). To listen to the episode in full, visit *historyextra.com/george-ii-podcast*

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GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X4, CAROLINE MARDON X1

THE RETURN OF THE KING

30 JAN 1649

▼ Charles I is beheaded outside the Banqueting House in Whitehall.

1 JAN 1651

Charles II is crowned king of Scotland at Scone Abbey having already, in June 1650, reluctantly promised to establish Presbyterianism (a branch of Protestantism originating in Scotland) across all three kingdoms.

3 SEP 1651

Hoping to take back the English crown, Charles II and his mainly Scottish army take on Oliver Cromwell's superior forces at Worcester and lose. The young king narrowly evades capture and is forced to flee to France, disguised as a servant.

3 SEP 1658

▲ Oliver Cromwell dies, aged 59. His eldest son, Richard, succeeds him as lord protector.

MAY 1659

▶ With little political or military experience, Richard Cromwell is unable to command the respect or confidence of the army and parliament. Nine months after his father's death, he resigns, ending the Protectorate.

APR 1668

▲ Charles begins a relationship with orange seller-turned-actor Nell Gwyn.

SUMMER 1667

Charles forms the Cabal ministry – a private group of high councillors who help him extend his power. The first letters of the names or titles of the five most prominent men – Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley and Lauderdale – give the Cabal its name.

2 SEP 1666

▼ The Great Fire of London begins in a baker's shop off Pudding Lane. Some 13,200 houses, as well as St Paul's Cathedral, are destroyed. The financial costs are estimated at £10m.

FEB 1666

Catherine of Braganza suffers a miscarriage. She will lose two more pregnancies before 1669 and will never bear a living heir for the king.

1665–66

▶ The Great Plague of London kills as many as 100,000 people, roughly 20 per cent of the city's population. It is the worst outbreak of plague in England since the Black Death of 1348.

JUN 1670

Charles signs a secret treaty with Louis XIV. In it he promises to convert to Catholicism at a future date and provide warships and soldiers to help the French war against the Dutch, in return for French subsidies.

MAR 1672

Charles bypasses parliament and issues the Declaration of Indulgence, which states that penal laws against Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters will be removed. Parliamentary protests see the proclamation revoked.

1672–74

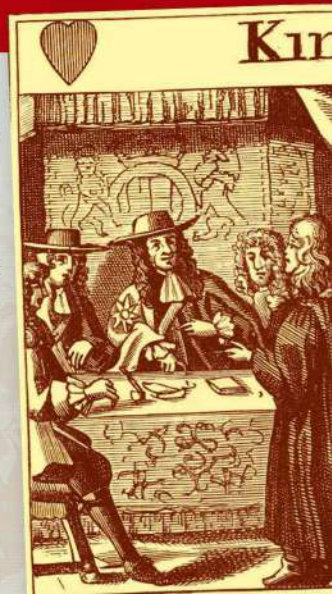
▼ According to the terms of his secret treaty with Louis XIV, Charles sends the English navy to support France in its war with the Dutch Republic.

MAR 1675

▲ John Flamsteed is appointed the first astronomer royal. He is charged with drawing up an accurate map of the night sky, which can be used for navigation.

SEP 1678

▶ A renegade Anglican clergyman named Titus Oates informs parliament of a fictitious plot (known as the Popish Plot) alleging that members of the Jesuit religious order are planning to assassinate Charles II and bring his brother James, Duke of York to the throne.



GETTY IMAGES X10, ALAMY X6

We chart the most pivotal moments of the Restoration era: from Charles II's triumphant homecoming to the highs and lows that came to define his quarter-century reign

WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN

4 APR 1660

The exiled king issues the Declaration of Breda, outlining his terms for a restoration of the monarchy, including freedom of religious conscience and a "general pardon" for those who swear loyalty to him. It is made public on 1 May.

29 MAY 1660

▲ Charles II triumphantly enters London on his 30th birthday. His huge procession makes its way to Whitehall, where the king meets with peers and MPs, who queue to kiss his hand.

NOV 1660

▼ The Royal Society is founded at Gresham College, London.

30 JAN 1661

The bodies of Oliver Cromwell, Robert Blake, John Bradshaw and Henry Ireton – all instrumental in the trial and execution of Charles I – are exhumed and posthumously hanged, drawn and quartered, after which their heads are placed on spikes above Westminster Hall.

23 APR 1661

Charles II is crowned king of England at Westminster Abbey. The loss or destruction of the Crown Jewels during the Commonwealth era has seen new pieces of royal regalia specially made for the occasion.

MAR 1665 – JUL 1667

▼ The Second Anglo-Dutch War, stemming from commercial rivalry between England and the Dutch Republic, ends in victory for the Dutch.

OCT 1662

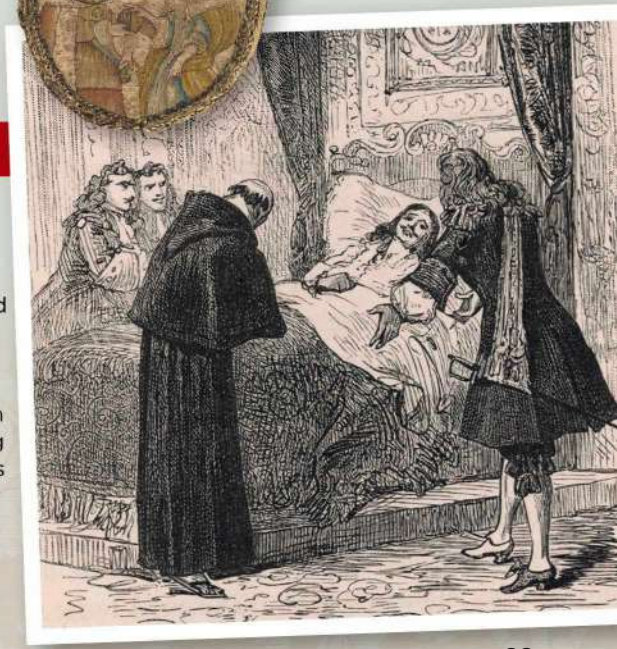
In need of money, Charles agrees to sell Dunkirk, which has been in English hands since 1658, to Louis XIV for 5 million livres (around £320,000). The price is later brought down by a 12 per cent discount.

21 MAY 1662

▼ Charles II marries the Portuguese princess Catherine of Braganza.

19 MAY 1662

The Act of Uniformity enforces the use of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*. More than 2,000 clergymen refuse to comply and are expelled from the Church of England.



1679–81

A parliamentary bill is introduced in May 1679, intended to exclude Charles II's brother and heir – the Catholic James, Duke of York – from the succession. The so-called Exclusion Crisis continues until 1681, when Charles dissolves parliament for the last time before his death.

MAY 1679

The Habeas Corpus act is passed, ensuring that no one can be imprisoned unlawfully. The term – Latin for "you may have the body" – has ancient beginnings in the common law of England, dating back before the creation of Magna Carta in 1215.

EARLY 1683

▲ A group of Protestants, including James, Duke of Monmouth (an illegitimate son of Charles II), plan to murder the king and his heir in the Rye House Plot.

6 FEB 1685

▶ Charles II dies at the Palace of Whitehall, having apparently suffered a stroke a few days earlier. In his final moments he converts to Roman Catholicism, taking Communion, and is anointed with holy oil. His younger brother succeeds him as James VII and II.

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RESTORATION

Dr Clare Jackson answers key questions about the historical period that was shaped by Charles II's return to the throne

Q: What was the Restoration?

A: In short, the Restoration was the re-establishment of Charles II as king of England following more than a decade of different types of constitutional regime. Charles II's father, Charles I, had acceded to the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland in 1625, but his reign had been tumultuous. In the late 1630s, his authority had started to collapse, and he'd faced increasing challenges to his rule in all three kingdoms, which blew up into what we think of now as the Civil Wars. The conflict lasted through the 1640s until the decision was taken by a purged parliament and army leaders to put Charles I on trial, and he was executed in 1649. At that point, his eldest son, Charles, Prince of Wales, who was 18, was immediately named as his father's successor in Scotland, thereby becoming King Charles II.

LEFT: **A Victorian-era painting imagines Oliver Cromwell gazing at the body of King Charles I, whose death warrant he had signed in January 1649**

RIGHT: **Charles I's death paved the way for the creation of the short-lived English Republic**

DID YOU KNOW?

THE VEST IS HISTORY

After his execution, Charles I's clothing was removed from his body and distributed among the people in attendance. The silk vest the king wore on the scaffold is now in the possession of the Museum of London, and still bears several prominent bloodstains.

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

The Scots very pointedly declared the young Charles to be not only king of Scotland, but also king of England and Ireland, and he spent the next 11 years in exile, trying to support royalist attempts to re-establish the monarchy during the very unstable years of first the English Commonwealth, and then the Cromwellian Protectorate. There was a bewildering succession of short-lived regimes that followed Oliver Cromwell's death in 1658, but in the spring of 1660, parliament made the decision to invite Charles II back as king of England. Today, we tend to date the Restoration from the re-establishment of the monarchy in 1660, but Charles II always dated the start of his reign as the moment of his father's death on 30 January 1649.

Q: How did the Restoration come about?

A: You might think that the Interregnum – the period between Charles I's death and Charles II's restoration – would have been a time of settling down following years of upheaval, but the reality was that there was never any real security about what the next year might look like. Part of the reason for Oliver Cromwell's popularity was that he appeared to bring stability; I think most historians would probably say that the way the Restoration turned out in 1660 was the result of several complex factors that only came together in the 18 months before it actually took place.

Oliver Cromwell died in September 1658, and it was quickly announced that his eldest son, Richard, would succeed him as lord protector, even though he had little in the way of military or political experience. Richard Cromwell's Protectorate was very

"PART OF THE REASON FOR CROMWELL'S POPULARITY WAS THAT HE APPEARED TO BRING STABILITY"

short-lived, and he was unable to command the confidence of MPs, or indeed the army, on whose power the Protectorate essentially sat. A series of confusing constitutional experiments followed Richard's resignation in May 1659, and there was a lot of affection for what was known as the 'good old cause' (re-establishing a Republic).

But increasingly, there were also irreconcilable divisions between the army and many civilian politicians, as well as a general feeling of constitutional exhaustion and a desire for normality. And all the time, there was Charles II's court in exile, biding its time and ready to offer everything that the English people thought they needed at that stage – stability, traditional government and so on – but waiting for the right moment to make a serious move.

It was much more desirable for Charles II that his own people restore him to the throne; there were serial offers, especially in the late 1650s, from countries like Spain and France to help with an armed invasion on his behalf. But that wouldn't have done much to help Charles's legitimacy or credibility with the English people.

After this succession of different types of constitutional regime, there was a great deal of instability, to put it mildly, and in 1660, parliament invited Charles II to reclaim his throne. Charles himself was skilful in helping to draft literature confirming that, if restored as king, he would not prioritise vengeance. The Declaration of Breda, drafted by the exiled court in April 1660, made it clear that Charles wanted to offer stability, to respect the rule of law, and work with a free parliament. On the religious front, he famously promised "liberty to tender Consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted... for differences of opinion in matters of Religion". It was certainly a reassuring manifesto and one that seemed to offer stability and legitimacy.

ABOVE LEFT: **Oliver Cromwell's body lies in state following his death in 1658**

TOP RIGHT: **Cromwell's son, Richard, proved to be a spectacularly poor choice of successor**

BOTTOM RIGHT: **An illustration depicts army chiefs forcing Richard to abdicate**

Charles II made a brief stopover in Rotterdam on his return to England, where he was greeted by jubilant crowds not unlike those that awaited him in Dover

Q: How was Charles II received when he returned to England?

A: Once his return had been agreed, things happened very quickly; Charles, who was staying in the Protestant Dutch town of Breda where he worked closely with the English deputations, was less than a day's sailing from England.

After a series of farewell banquets and ceremonies, he sailed to Dover, famously accompanied by a 27-year-old Samuel Pepys, who recorded it all in his diary. Upon landing they moved with a lot of pomp and ceremony to Canterbury and, finally, on 29 May 1660 (Charles's 30th birthday), he made his entry into London where there were crowds of people cheering and welcoming him. Most people, I think, were relieved and surprised that his return had taken place in so bloodless a manner, and that the emphasis was on celebration rather than division.

DID YOU KNOW?

A ROYAL RELIC

Upon his return to London, Charles II attended dinner in the Banqueting House – the same building his father had been executed in front of in 1649. It is now the only surviving part of the Palace of Whitehall, which was hit by a huge fire in 1698.

Q: How quickly would news of Charles II's return have spread?

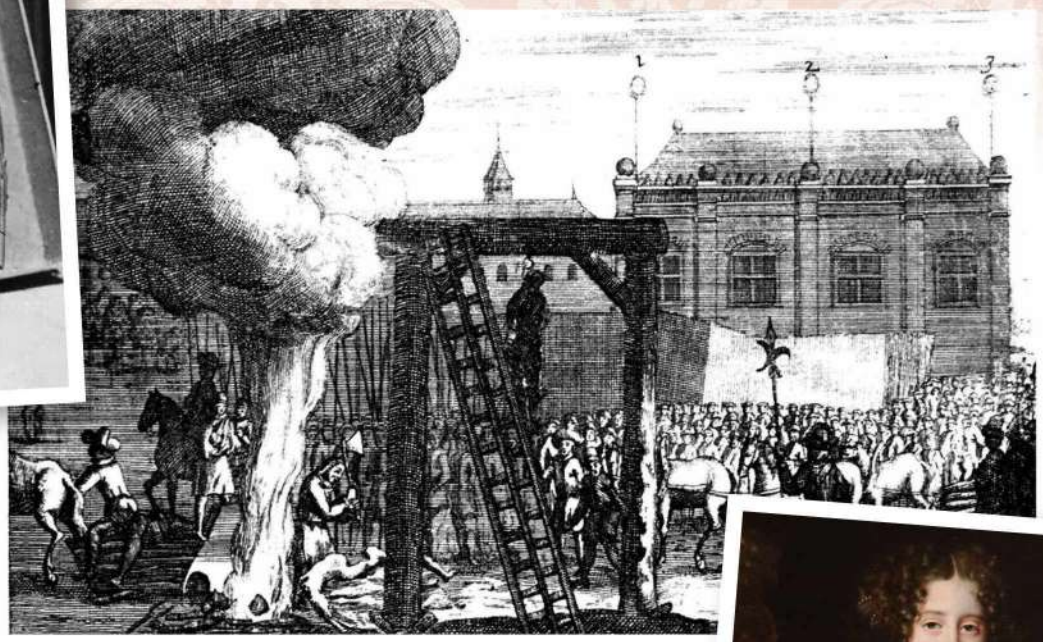
A: Very quickly. When Charles I was beheaded on 30 January 1649, the news had travelled to Edinburgh fast enough for Charles II to be crowned king of Scotland just a few days later, on 6 February. One of the interesting dilemmas of the Restoration for the exiled court was that owning any image of Charles II had been made a crime during the 1650s, so there were very few pictures of the king when he returned in 1660. Consequently, there was much anxiety to distribute images of him; some of these were crudely drawn tavern signs and woodcuts, and many purists were appalled at the character of such images. But the Restoration court needed to disseminate as many likenesses of him as possible.

A state portrait is traditionally commissioned at the accession of a new monarch, but, because of the precariousness of the situation, it was decided not to create a formal portrait of Charles's English coronation in 1661. More than any other monarch, Charles II was always aware that his survival on the throne depended on his subjects wanting him there. Despite this, there was still a great amount of state theatre to the occasion. Charles had decided that his coronation day would be 23 April 1661 – St George's Day – and for the rest of his reign, the great National Saint's Day and his crowning would be celebrated together.

Q: Were there any repercussions for the Cromwell family after Charles II's restoration?

A: One thing I've always found remarkable was the obvious vengeance directed at Oliver Cromwell himself. Despite all the

"KING CHARLES II WAS ALWAYS AWARE THAT HIS SURVIVAL ON THE THRONE DEPENDED ON HIS SUBJECTS WANTING HIM THERE"



LEFT: **One of several death masks made following Oliver Cromwell's demise** BELOW: **Cromwell, Henry Ireton and John Bradshaw were posthumously 'executed' in 1661; their heads are shown here on pikes, labelled 1, 2 and 3 respectively**

Restoration's rhetoric of forgetting and moving on, vengeance was targeted towards those directly involved in Charles I's execution. Accordingly, Oliver Cromwell's body – like those of other regicides who had died before 1660 – was exhumed, subjected to a ritual hanging, drawing and quartering, with his head placed on a spike. I studied at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, the college that Oliver Cromwell had attended as an undergraduate, and to which, in 1960, his severed head was entrusted and buried. To this day, the exact location of Cromwell's head within the college is a secret, such is the sensitivity that surrounds it. But apart from that, there was remarkably little vengeance directed towards the living members of the Cromwell family; even Richard Cromwell was left alone and lived until he was 85.

Q: How can we broadly characterise life in Restoration England?

A: There were lots of different strains to it. The image of Charles II as the 'Merry Monarch' has become almost synonymous with the era – the flowing curls, cavalier costumes, the reopening of the theatres.

For the rest of the country, though, on a day-to-day basis, there must have been a lot of apprehension. This was a population that had risen in revolt against their government and then lived through a very bewildering and discombobulating 20-year period. The radicalism of the Civil Wars and the ideas that had been articulated – be it about annual parliaments or universal suffrage – could never be simply 'unthought'.

The historian Jonathan Scott has talked about this being a population that had all the hallmarks of something like PTSD, living through a very traumatic period and instinctively inclined to become alarmed by any moment of instability, fearing a return to civil war and revolution. In the late 1670s and early 1680s, when Charles's reign became very unstable during the so-called Exclusion Crisis [when moves were made to exclude Charles's Catholic brother and heir, James, Duke of York, from the succession, *see page 44*], there were real fears that '1641 is come again' and the chaos of civil war would be repeated.

Q: Did the Restoration have a discernible impact on the status of women in society?

A: For most women, restoring the monarchy was assumed to restore all the patriarchal structures and authority that had been in place before the Civil Wars. There had been something of an explosion of female publishing and petitioning during the conflict and later, too, in the 1650s, but a lot of that would have declined during the Restoration period. But women's agency is evident in other areas of life. A lot of women had been widowed in the Civil Wars, and many continued to occupy very responsible roles into the Restoration or spent years petitioning on behalf of injured or deceased family members. So there were different avenues of female influence.

The idea of state mistresses was something that Charles II's reign really epitomised in a way that the English monarchy hadn't seen before, and many people looked to the king's mistresses, particularly the French-born Louise de Kéroualle, who became duchess of Portsmouth, as alternative avenues to Charles. That's just one sort of woman in a very privileged position, though; the general emphasis was very much on re-establishing traditional, patriarchal norms of social order.

ABOVE: **Fears that Charles's brother and heir, James, Duke of York, would 're-Catholicise' the British Isles brought back unhappy memories of the turbulent 1640s**

RIGHT: **Louise de Kérouaille, the daughter of a Breton noble, was just one of Charles II's many mistresses**

Many of the more radical ideas about gender that had emerged through the Civil Wars couldn't be forgotten, though, and we find that, wrapped up in the fears of a descent back into civil war that were expressed by many men at the time, were concerns about the return of the sorts of articulate women who were publishing in the 1650s.

INTERVIEW: ELINOR EVANS

DR CLARE JACKSON is a historian and senior tutor at Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge. Her books include *Charles II: The Star King* (Allen Lane, 2016) and the award-winning *Devil-Land: England Under Siege, 1588–1688* (Allen Lane, 2021)

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X4

THE MAKING OF A MONARCH

By the time he came to power in 1660, Charles II had already endured war, exile and the execution of his father

It's the early hours of 15 October 1651, and most of the residents of the West Sussex town of Shoreham-by-Sea are asleep in their beds. But not all of them. Two men walk silently across a beach and board a boat. A couple of hours later, before the Sun has crept above the horizon, the vessel slips out to sea. And barely anyone has even noticed.

As turning points in English history go, the duo's departure from made for a fairly unremarkable scene. Yet a turning point it undoubtedly was. One of the men was, in fact, the future King Charles II. And he was fleeing for his life.

A few months earlier, Charles had launched a bid to win back the kingdoms that Oliver Cromwell's forces had seized from his father, Charles I, in the Civil Wars that raged across the British Isles. That bid had ended in defeat and so the younger Charles was forced to beat a silent retreat back across the Channel – accompanied by his close friend, Lord Wilmot – before Cromwell's forces caught up with him.

A PERILOUS PREDICAMENT

And catch up with him they nearly did. Hours after Charles departed for the continent, his pursuers swept into Shoreham in search of their prey. They would have good reason for rueing this nearest of misses, for Charles wouldn't be down and out forever. Nine years later he would return to English shores – this time not as a hapless fugitive but as the master of all surveyed.

BELOW RIGHT: **Oliver Cromwell, who became lord protector in 1653, crushed Charles II's attempts to invade England from Scotland and seize power**

BELOW LEFT: **A 1632 painting depicting an infant Charles II (*far left*) with his parents and younger sister, Mary. Ten years later the British Isles would be torn apart by war**

As his boat pulled away from Shoreham on that October morning, Charles could have been forgiven for wondering how he found himself in this perilous predicament. This was not how it was meant to be. When he was born at St James's Palace in May 1630, his inheritance was the three crowns of England, Scotland and Ireland, and the awesome power that came with being a divinely appointed ruler in the 17th century. On the day on which he was born, a brilliant star shone brightly in the daytime skies over London. Today, this is believed to have been a supernova; back in 1630, it was interpreted as a sign of great things to come.

ON THE CONTINENT

It was not to be. At 12 years old, Charles's pampered childhood – spent chiefly at the courts of St James and Whitehall in London and Richmond Palace in Surrey – was shattered by war. Over the preceding years, tensions between King Charles I and an array of opponents over religious policy, the power of parliament and the question of the king's divine right to rule had reached boiling point. In 1642, those tensions exploded into outright conflict

DID YOU KNOW?

ISLAND RETREAT

The Channel Island of Jersey supported the royalist cause during the Civil Wars, offering sanctuary to Charles II on two separate occasions. Notably, the islanders held a proclamation ceremony for the exiled royal on 17 February 1649.

GETTY IMAGES X6, ALAMY X1

LEFT: **A portrait of a 12-year-old Charles II, likely painted to commemorate his presence at the battle of Edgehill**
BELOW: **The 1642 clash, fought in southern Warwickshire, was the first pitched battle of the Civil Wars**

– and the consequences for the king and his family would prove catastrophic.

The younger Charles may have only been a boy, but he wasn't sheltered from the conflict. He was present when his father raised the royal standard at the battle of Edgehill, the first pitched battle of the Civil Wars, and was made a commander of royalist forces in the West Country when he was just 14. But soon the tide of the war was turning decisively in favour of the king's parliamentarian enemies and, in March 1646, his eldest son was forced to flee the mainland. It wouldn't, of course, be for the last time.

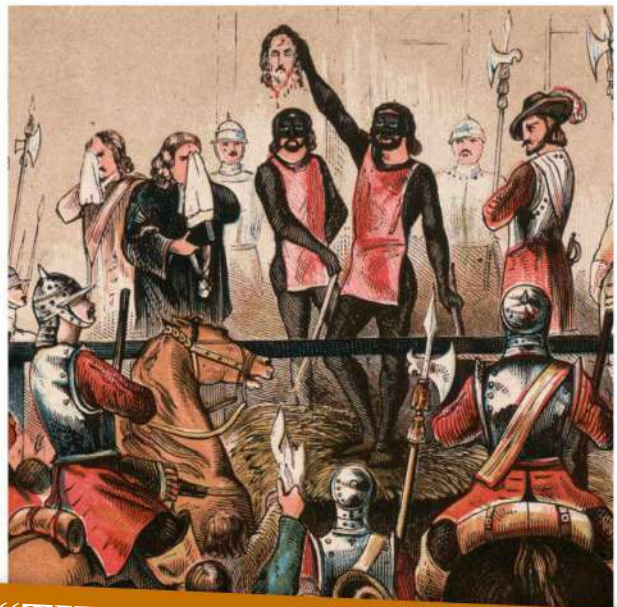
The then Prince Charles initially made for the royalist strongholds of the Scilly Isles and Jersey before crossing the Channel to mainland Europe. At first, he joined his mother – the French-born Henrietta Maria – near Paris, where he lived under the protection of the French king, Louis XIV. Later, however, he moved to the Hague (in the modern-day Netherlands), where his brother-in-law William II, Prince of Orange, seemed more likely to offer support to the royalist cause.

OFF WITH HIS HEAD

All the while, back in England, things were going from bad to worse for Charles's father. The war was now heading inexorably in parliament's favour, and, in May 1646, the king placed himself in the hands of a Scottish army, who later handed him over to English parliamentarian forces. By the end of 1647, Charles I would find himself in captivity in Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight.

But what would the parliamentarians do with their royal prisoner? The answer came in dramatic fashion in early 1649, when the leaders of the New Model Army and the more radical parliamentarians put the king on trial for high treason. After being convicted, he was beheaded in Whitehall.

The execution of Charles I was a truly stunning event that sent shockwaves coursing through Europe's courts. The question that was now being asked was, what would the dead king's son do next?



"THE KING'S EXECUTION SENT SHOCKWAVES COURSING THROUGH EUROPE'S COURTS"

The answer arrived in June 1650, when Charles sailed to Scotland with the aim of wresting back his father's kingdoms. There, on 1 January 1651, he became the last monarch to be crowned north of the border, at a coronation ceremony at Scone Palace in Perthshire.

Unfortunately, Charles's return to the mainland hadn't gone unnoticed by Oliver Cromwell, now the most powerful man in the three kingdoms. The parliamentarian leader was determined to crush Charles's campaign before it had begun and sent an army north to stamp out the royalist uprising. That army inflicted a bloody defeat on the Scots at Dunbar, killing 3,000 and taking a further 10,000 prisoner.

Yet Charles hadn't given up all hope of regaining his father's kingdoms quite yet. In fact, soon he had devised a new plan: to march an army into England, join up with his supporters there, and drive towards London. But Charles had failed to read the room. South of the ▶

ABOVE LEFT: **The execution of Charles I was met with horror by onlookers. One witness claimed a "loud groan" rose from the crowd when the axe fell**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Charles II was crowned king of Scotland almost two years after the death of his father**

DID YOU KNOW?

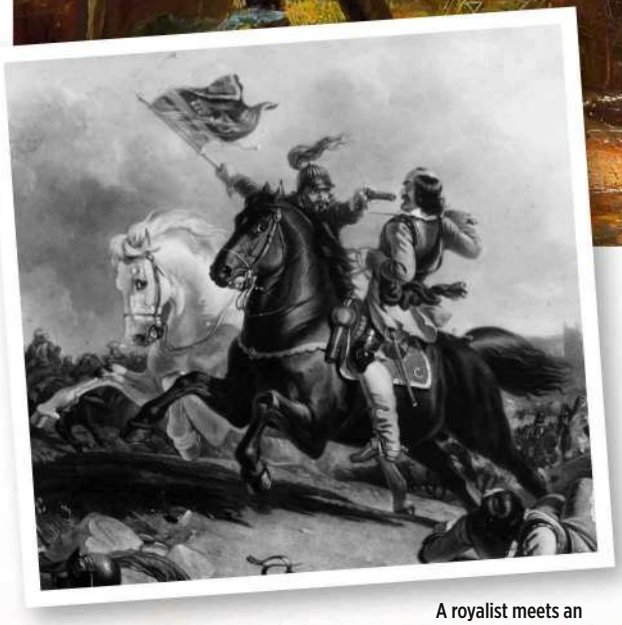
PRIME TARGET

The parliamentary forces apparently put a £1,000 bounty on Charles II's head after his dramatic escape from the battle of Worcester in September 1651. While it is hard to calculate a precise figure, that's the equivalent of around £145,000 today.

ABOVE: **Parliamentarian general George Monck switched allegiances and became a pivotal figure in the restoration of Charles to the throne**

LEFT: **A Victorian-era painting depicts the king riding to Bristol in the aftermath of the battle of Worcester, dressed as the servant of Jane Lane, the sister of a royalist officer**

"CHARLES SPENT EIGHT YEARS FILLING HIS DAYS PARTYING, RIDING, SAILING AND WOMANISING"



A royalist meets an unfortunate end at the battle of Worcester. Charles's men were no match for Oliver Cromwell's army

◀ border there simply wasn't the appetite for more death and destruction, especially death and destruction meted out by a marauding Scottish army. When Charles marched south, the anticipated explosion of popular support didn't materialise. Even Charles I's former royalist capital of Oxford refused to open its gates to the Scottish army. The invasion turned into a fiasco.

That fiasco reached a nightmarish crescendo when a parliamentarian army numbering 28,000 men caught up with Charles II's army in Worcester. With the Scottish army less than half the size of its opponents, and absolutely exhausted, the result was a bloodbath.

What would have made Cromwell's victory even more complete was if his forces had captured Charles. Yet somehow the fugitive king slipped through the net: first by hiding in an oak tree (*see box on page 37*), then, assisted by a young woman named Jane Lane, whose brother was an officer in the royalist army, riding to Bristol. From there, the king travelled to the beach at Shoreham where he and his friend Lord Wilmot made their getaway to the European continent.

Following the defeat at Worcester, Charles's hopes of ever regaining what he believed to be his rightful inheritance seemed to be well and truly expunged. And so he spent the next eight years enjoying the hospitality of various royal courts, filling his days partying, riding, sailing and womanising.

THE END OF THE REPUBLIC

But soon his prospects were to take another turn – and, once again, the trigger was a dramatic change of events in England. On 3 September 1658, Oliver Cromwell died. With his passing, the cement that had held together the republican regime that had ruled in the absence of the monarchy, began to

GETTY IMAGES X7, ALAMY X2

crumble. The army didn't trust Oliver's nominated successor, his son Richard, and so in May 1659 they forced him into retirement. In a kingdom increasingly living under the yoke of high taxes and declining trade, what followed was a period marked by disputes between parliament and army.

Enter George Monck. This Scotland-based parliamentarian general sensed that the public was becoming increasingly receptive to the idea of a restoration of the monarchy and so, in February 1660, Monck marched an army south into England with the aim of bringing that about. In March, with a parliament that was now full of newly elected royalist supporters, Monck began to make private overtures to King Charles.

The events of spring 1660 marked an astonishing change of fortunes for the exiled king. The famed diarist and naval administrator Samuel Pepys had recently reported that Charles and his court were virtually living in rags, not a coat among them worth more than 40 shillings. Yet now he was on the cusp of regaining his father's throne.

A critical development in that scenario being realised was the Declaration of Breda (named after the Dutch city in which the king was residing), in which Charles set out the terms for the restoration of the monarchy. In the declaration, he struck a strikingly conciliatory tone, offering a full pardon to all who appealed to him within 40 days, except those who had signed his father's death warrant in 1649; "liberty to tender consciences" (unless religious differences threatened national peace); and payment of arrears of army pay.

In a letter addressed to the speaker of the House of Commons, the king even extended an olive branch to MPs, appealing to them as "wise and dispassionate men and good patriots".

A WARMEST OF WELCOMES

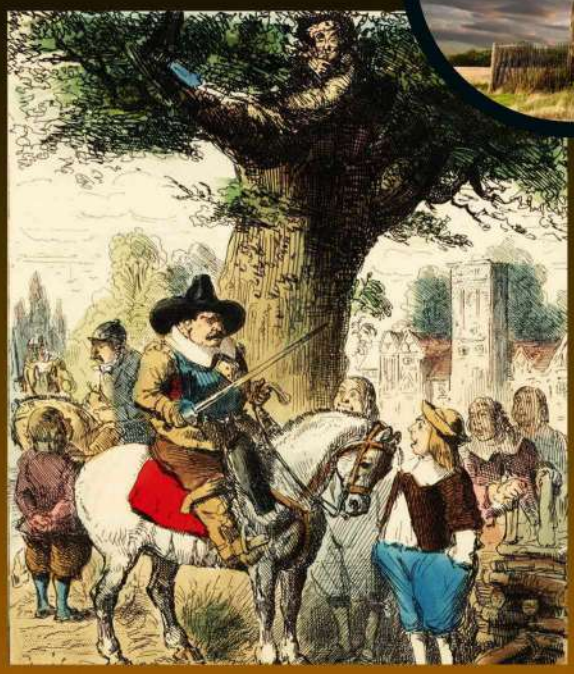
The campaign behind the restoration of the monarchy had now gained an unstoppable momentum. Soon, people were flooding into Breda to wish him well, including Sir John Grenville, who came with a large sum of money from the new Convention Parliament and the City of London. When Charles saw this, Pepys reports, he became "so joyful, that he called the Princess Royal and Duke of York to look upon it as it lay in the Portmanteau before it was taken out".

A few days later, having received deputations from parliamentary commissioners in the Hague, Charles set sail for England. By the time his fleet emerged over the horizon, thousands of people had lined Dover's iconic white cliffs. They were there to welcome the ultimate survivor: their returning king.

WORDS: SPENCER MIZEN

ABOVE: **Charles was met by huge crowds of well-wishers upon his arrival in Dover on 25 May 1660**
TOP: **A large gathering of people had also watched his departure from the Dutch port of Scheveningen**

The Royal Oak (*right*) at Boscobel House, Shropshire, is said to be a descendant of the tree in which Charles hid while trying to evade capture from parliamentarians in 1651 (*below*)



BOUGH FOR THE KING

In 1651, a young Charles narrowly escaped the clutches of the parliamentarian forces thanks to an unlikely hiding place

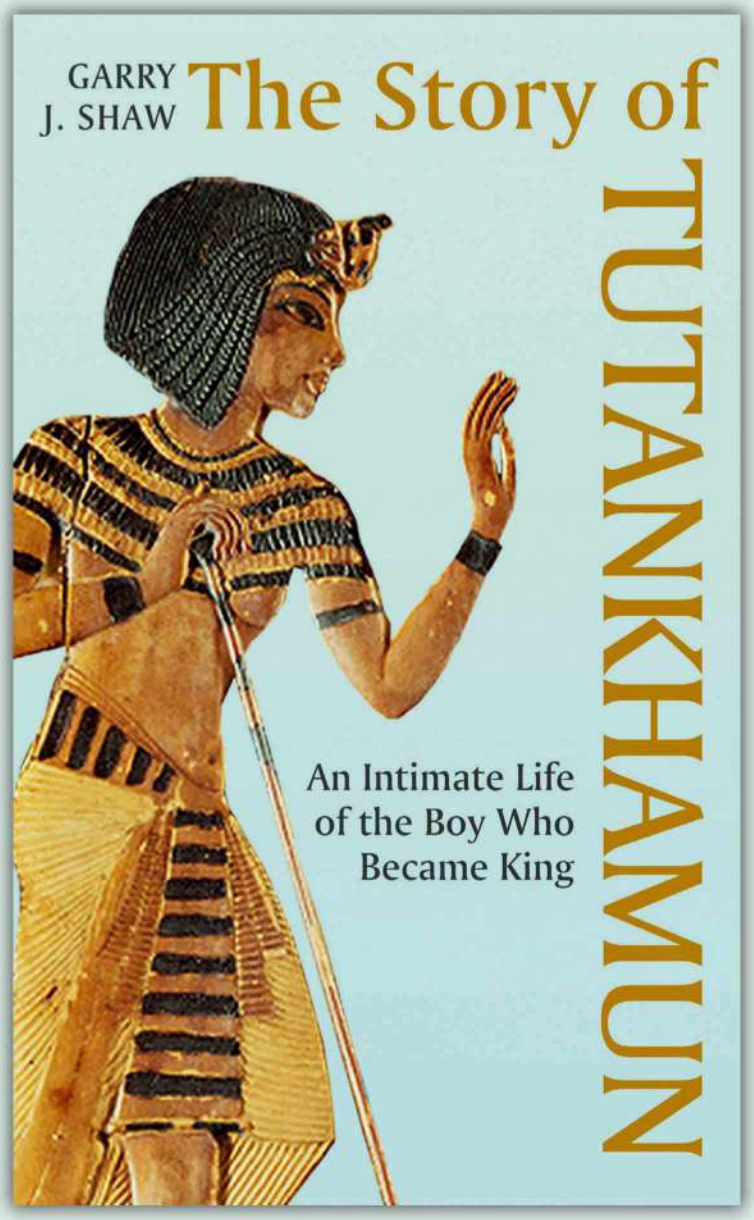
The search was on. A massive parliamentarian force had just crushed a Scottish army, led by Charles, at Worcester. Now, to put the icing on the cake, all the victors had to do was capture the fugitive king himself. With his army emphatically beaten and the king's supporters deserting him in droves, it would surely be the easiest of tasks.

Yet, as Charles's pursuers would discover over the next few days, the king was resourceful, elusive and not entirely without sympathisers. Among those still willing to support the king were the Penderels. This family of Roman Catholic farmers spirited the exhausted monarch – now disguised as a woodman – to their home, Boscobel House, nearly 40 miles from Worcester. Here, Charles was joined by a fellow royalist fugitive, William Careless. And it was Careless who came up with a quite remarkable plan: for the pair to evade their would-be captors by hiding in a nearby oak tree.

And that's exactly what they did, hurrying to the oak as dawn broke on 6 September 1651. "While we were in the tree we see soldiers going up and down in the thickest of the wood searching for persons escaped, we seeing them now and then peeping out of the woods," Charles II would later recall. The soldiers failed to find their quarry and Charles would, against all odds, escape to France. Nine years later he would be back. And this time there would be no need for hiding.

‘This exceptional account brings not only the reign of Tutankhamun back to life, it also shows the ruler in a new light, not only as king of ancient Egypt, but as a human being.’

Christina Geisen, University of Cambridge



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Yale

Charles II leads a procession on the eve of his coronation at Westminster Abbey. The ceremony was a particularly lavish affair, reported to have cost at least £12,000 (around £1.8m today)

IN THE COURT OF THE PLAYBOY KING

With a penchant for partying and a string of mistresses to his name, not for nothing is Charles II remembered as the 'Merry Monarch'

A painting showing the regalia commissioned by Charles II for his coronation. The original Crown Jewels were almost entirely lost or destroyed during the Interregnum

On 27 July 1667, the diarist and naval administrator Samuel Pepys faithfully recorded the gossip he'd heard during a meeting that day with John Fenn, the paymaster to the navy treasurer. After discussing politics, Fenn confided: "The King and the Court were never in the world so bad as they are now for gaming, swearing, whoring, and drinking, and the most abominable vices that ever were in the world."

Charles II's court was famous for its debauchery. In fact, since his youth spent travelling around continental Europe in exile, Charles had developed a taste for vice – he fathered his first illegitimate child, James, when he was 18. (He would go on to have 12 more children, all of them illegitimate.)

CORONATION TREATS

When Charles rode into London on his 30th birthday as the nation's king, he didn't leave his appetite for excess behind. The coronation itself was a sumptuous affair, taking place almost a year after his triumphant return from exile – the wait was partly due to the fact that his father's crown had been destroyed in the wake of his execution, so new regalia fit for a newly instated king had to be crafted. ▶

GETTY IMAGES X3

DID YOU KNOW?

PEPYS SHOW

Samuel Pepys was a noted fan of Nell Gwyn's acting talents. Reflecting on her performance as Florimel in John Dryden's 1667 play *Secret Love*, he wrote: "So great performance of a comical part was never, I believe, in the world before as Nell do this."

"THE KING WAS FOCUSED LESS ON THE MINUTIAE OF POLITICS, AND MORE ON THE PURSUIT OF PLEASURE"

◀ Although the crown was new, Charles was determined to uphold tradition. The day before his formal crowning on 23 April 1661, he made the customary procession from the Tower of London to Westminster Abbey – the last monarch in England's history to do so. He spared no expense with the coronation, commanding a fleet of carpenters to construct special tiered seats in the cavernous Westminster Abbey, so the throngs of people attending the ceremony would be able to get a clear view of their monarch. Pepys, who was in the audience, wrote that after the crown was placed on his head, "a great shout begun".

While Charles had looked every inch the powerful young king on coronation day, in practice he was focused less on the minutiae of politics, and more on the pursuit of pleasure. He encouraged his courtiers to reach the heights of hedonism in his court, with the poet John Dryden describing it as a "laughing, quaffing and unthinking time". Gambling was rampant, and the court calendar was packed with balls and feasts, where courtiers would dress up in their grandest attire and seek to outdo each other with their extravagance.

As one might expect, this was in stark contrast to the sombreness of Cromwellian England – but Charles was also more decadent than his father, Charles I. In fact, Charles I had been appalled by the depravity that he'd witnessed during the time of his father, James VI and I, and had been determined to clean up the court. During his 11-year "Personal Rule", it had been a place of elegance that magnified the power of the monarchy, modelled after the respectful Spanish court. He had even insisted that servants bend the knee when they brought platters of food to him – the only monarch in Europe to do so at the time.

ABOVE: **A c1660 work depicts Charles II dancing at a banquet in the Netherlands, held to celebrate his imminent return to England. To his left is his sister, Mary**

LEFT: **It didn't take long for the king's court to become associated with drinking, gambling and debauchery**

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X6

ABOVE: **Nell Gwyn sold oranges to theatregoers before being scouted as an actor**

RIGHT: **An unplanned pregnancy saw Anne Hyde forced to marry James, Duke of York (the future James VII and II)**

That's not to say there was no place for pageantry, though. Charles I and his wife, Henrietta Maria, adored masques – a blend of opera, theatre, ballet and ball. They were often staged at Whitehall's Banqueting House, with the who's who of the court mingling underneath the glorious painted ceiling.

A NOTORIOUS WOMANISER

Charles I's son, Charles II, was also a fan of the theatre – but perhaps for different reasons. Although he was married to the Portuguese infanta Catherine of Braganza, who had brought with her an impressive dowry of 2 million crowns, plus the ports of Tangier and Bombay, he in no way felt constrained by the bounds of holy matrimony. He took many mistresses (*see box below*), including actors – the entertainers Nell Gwyn and Moll Davis both bore his children.

There was often tension between the mistresses, as Charles regularly romanced multiple women at once. On one occasion, Gwyn added a potent laxative into Davis's dinner, so she wouldn't be able to sleep with the king.

Charles wasn't the only man in his court to take mistresses. His brother, James, Duke of York (the future James VII and II), was also a notorious womaniser. He caused a huge scandal when he began seeing Anne Hyde, the daughter of Charles's chancellor, and she fell pregnant. In 1660 he was obliged to marry her – a situation described by the Earl of Sandwich as being akin to defecating in a hat and then putting it on one's head.

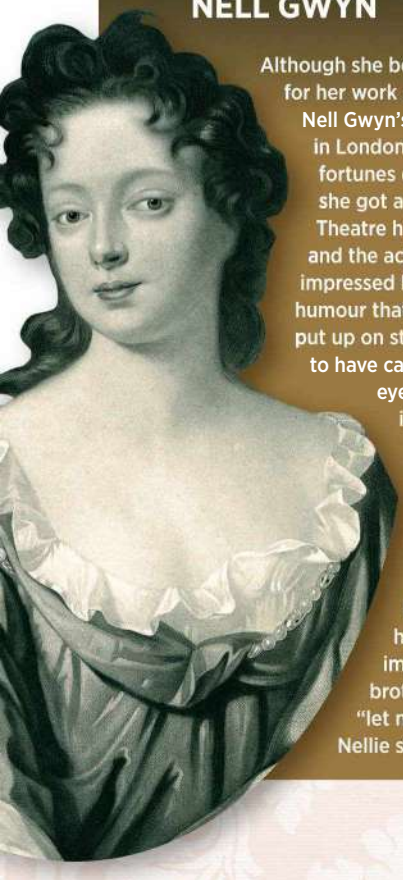
As well as unplanned pregnancies, there was another unfortunate side effect of the explosion of extra-marital affairs: a corresponding surge in venereal disease. Charles himself had "the pox" – allegedly syphilis – with one of his mistresses, Louise de Kéroualle, laying into him in 1674 for infecting her with the disease. In fact, so many people contracted syphilis that a dedicated "pox doctor" helped treat those affected in the court.

It's perhaps unsurprising that, by the end of Charles's reign, people were beginning to tire of the monarch's "merriness". In fact, in the original verse naming him the "merry monarch", John Wilmot, the Earl of Rochester, had gone on to say: "Restless he rolls about from whore to whore / A merry monarch, scandalous and poor".

WORDS: RHIANNON DAVIES

THE MISTRESSES OF KING CHARLES II

We examine the lives of the Merry Monarch's most famous lovers...



NELL GWYN

Although she became renowned for her work on the stage, Nell Gwyn's life began in London's slums. Her fortunes changed after she got a job at the King's Theatre hawking oranges, and the actors were so impressed by her quick humour that she was soon put up on stage. She seems to have caught Charles's eye when she was in her late teens, with the pair going on to have two sons together. When the king was on his deathbed, he famously implored his brother, James, "let not poor Nellie starve".

BARBARA VILLIERS

With a mass of auburn curls, Barbara Villiers was renowned for her great beauty. Although she dominated Charles's affections for over a decade, giving him at least five children, she was roundly hated. She demanded huge sums from the monarch: once, he forked out more than £25,000 to settle one of her gambling debts. Villiers also funnelled some of the king's money directly into the pockets of her other lovers – men whom she made no attempt to hide.

LOUISE DE KÉROUALLE

The daughter of a Breton noble, Louise de Kéroualle used her position as the king's mistress to help France – some thought she was even an out-and-out spy. She had first met Charles in 1670, but refused to let him sleep with her for a year; once the long-awaited liaison had taken place, he threw a lavish two-week party to celebrate. Kéroualle lived in luxury in a Whitehall suite, and was showered with more money than even Villiers had managed to extract.

INNOVATION AND EXPLORATION

King Charles II may be remembered for his hedonism, but he also supported a wide range of scientific and artistic endeavours that would help shape the modern world

Charles II has gone down in history as the 'Merry Monarch' due to his well-known pleasure-seeking proclivities, but that nickname belies his dedicated patronage of science and the arts during his reign. Yet it was a connection to his pursuit of pleasure that spurred him on to one of his most significant commissions.

In the mid-17th century, many minds were concerned with the 'longitude problem'. The challenge of finding a ship's precise longitude at sea had haunted sailors for centuries. While latitude – the measurement of distance north or south of the Equator – was known, when out of sight of land, ships' crews had no method of telling how far east or west they were, meaning terrible consequences for many vessels.

One of Charles II's mistresses, a Frenchwoman named Louise de Kéroualle (*see page 41*), was aware of the puzzle. She heard a rumour through the French court that an astronomer and fellow countryman, Sieur de St Pierre, had devised a means of determining longitude at sea by observing the moon's position in relation to the background stars. Intrigued, she pressed the king to investigate, leading Charles II to set up a Royal Commission to examine the new proposals.

This commission marked the start of the Royal Observatory at Greenwich – the oldest scientific institution in Great Britain, founded by the king in 1675 – and the appointment of John Flamsteed to the role of astronomical observer (later astronomer royal). A new age of scientific investigation had begun.

TITANS OF SCIENCE

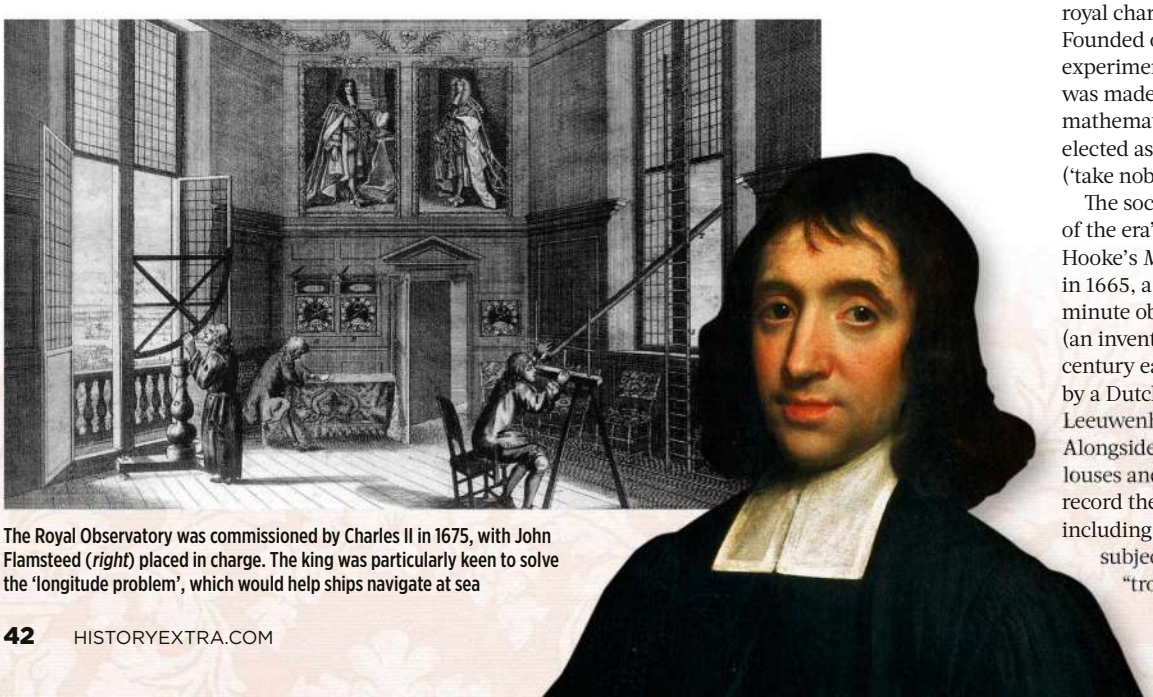
In the 16th and 17th centuries, many thinkers began to question received knowledge, turning instead to observation and experimentation, and the Restoration was an era when many titans of science flourished.

Figures such as Robert Boyle, Robert Hooke and Christopher Wren all gained prominence through the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge, which was formed on 28 November 1660 and granted a royal charter from Charles soon after. Founded on the principles of scientific experimentation, the early society was made up of leading philosophers, mathematicians and inventors, who elected as their motto *nullius in verba* ('take nobody's word for it').

MICROGRAPHIA:
OR SOME
Physiological Descriptions
OF
MINUTE BODIES
MADE BY
MAGNIFYING GLASSES.
WITH
OBSERVATIONS and INQUIRIES thereupon.
By R. HOOKE, Fellow of the ROYAL SOCIETY.
LONDON, Printed by Jo. Martyn, and Ja. Allestry, Printers to the ROYAL SOCIETY, and are to be sold at their Shop at the Bell in S. Paul's Church-yard. MDCLXV.

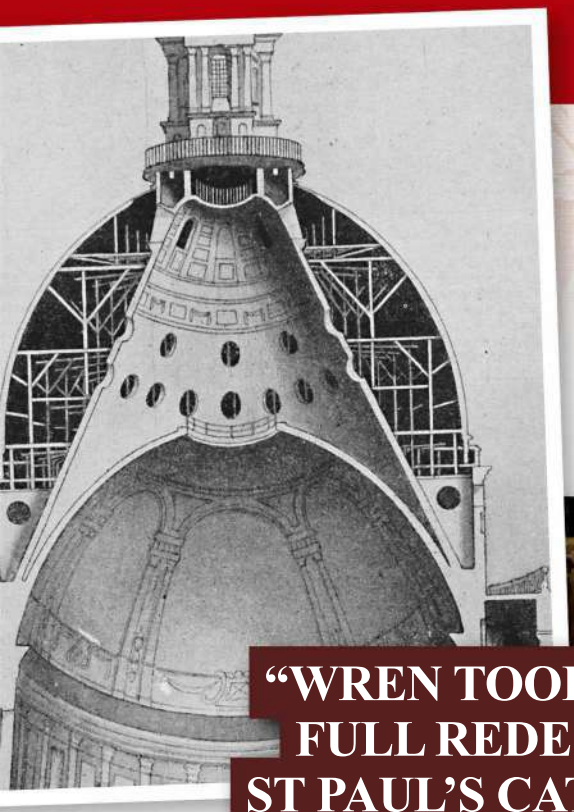
Robert Hooke's book *Micrographia*, published by the Royal Society in 1665, was described by famed diarist Samuel Pepys as "the most ingenious book that ever I read in my life"

The society's members produced some of the era's most eminent work. Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* was published in 1665, a groundbreaking study of minute objects through a microscope (an invention dating from around a century earlier that had been improved by a Dutchman named Antonie van Leeuwenhoek in the early 1660s). Alongside detailed drawings of gnats, louses and fleas, Hooke took care to record the methods of his experiments, including the tactic of dousing his subjects in alcohol. One ant was so "troublesom to be drawn", noted



The Royal Observatory was commissioned by Charles II in 1675, with John Flamsteed (*right*) placed in charge. The king was particularly keen to solve the 'longitude problem', which would help ships navigate at sea

GETTY IMAGES X9



LEFT: **A cross-section drawing showing the dome of the rebuilt St Paul's Cathedral**

RIGHT: **Its architect, Christopher Wren, also served as president of the Royal Society**

"WREN TOOK ON THE FULL REDESIGN OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, RESULTING IN TODAY'S SPECTACULAR LANDMARK"

Hooke, that he used brandy which "knock'd him down dead drunk, so that he became moveless". Hooke's study of objects that had been previously invisible to the naked eye was pivotal in advancing understanding of the natural world.

Polymath Christopher Wren, who served as the Royal Society's president between 1680 and 1682, was also deeply engaged in the challenge of determining longitude, and is another figure inextricable from innovation during the Restoration era. In 1663, Wren designed a 'weather-clock' that would record temperature, humidity, rainfall and barometric pressure. As well as his experiments in anatomy, astronomy and geometry, Wren is today best known for his work as an architect.

Wren was sought by Charles II for the construction of new harbour defences at Tangiers (between 1661 and 1684, the Moroccan port city was occupied by English forces). Wren refused, though was later tasked with the restoration of Old St Paul's Cathedral to a more classical style. Before work could get fully underway, the site was ravaged by the Great Fire of London in 1666. Wren took on the full redesign, resulting in the spectacular landmark that survives to the present day – though true to the society's principles, the project was not without some experimentation. During the build, Wren used new techniques with gunpowder to demolish walls that remained after the fire; however, Wren's chosen method wasn't easy to control, and several workers were killed. By 1669, he had been appointed King's Surveyor of Works, and supervised the building and maintenance of all the royal palaces.

BELOW RIGHT: **A 1926 illustration depicts Nell Gwyn backstage at London's Theatre Royal, which received the king's patronage**

BELOW LEFT: **A portrait of Charles II by Dutch artist Peter Lely, who was appointed the king's 'principal painter in ordinary' in 1662**

ART AND THE STAGE

As well as taking a keen interest in architecture and science, Charles II was also patron to a mass of artwork. His investment wasn't merely aesthetic; the king was savvy to the prestige and power that a collection of art could convey. One of Charles's first acts as king was to hunt down the many works that had belonged to his late father, a large number of which had been sold by the government during the Interregnum.

Over the course of his 25-year reign, Charles amassed a significant collection, with art playing a vital role in representing his legitimacy and authority as monarch. He often employed foreign painters, most notably the Dutchman Peter Lely, who often painted the king wearing his robes of the Sovereign of the Order of the Garter (*see example below left*). Charles also recognised the value of art in strengthening diplomatic ties – in 1660 he accepted a gift that included sculpture and furniture from the Netherlands (although the present did not ensure peace; by 1665, the Second Anglo-Dutch War had begun).

Art wasn't all business for the king. Charles's willingness to experiment also meant changes for the lives of women, too. During his years spent abroad in exile, the king had witnessed women performing in public theatres on the continent. Upon his restoration to the throne in 1660, the king overturned the rigid Puritan rules that had banned theatrical performances, and decreed that women should be allowed to act on the stage. Female actors such as the king's mistresses Moll Davis and Nell Gwyn (*see page 41*) were able to make a name for themselves, while other women, such as Aphra Behn, were able to achieve success as writers.

While undoubtedly offering one form of progress, the parts for women were often bawdy and specifically intended to titillate Restoration audiences; so-called 'breeches roles' saw women playing men. These roles offered the chance for theatregoers to see the shape of women's legs – and perhaps also give a glimpse into how social progress continued to be shaped by the king's own indulgent lifestyle.

WORDS: ELINOR EVANS

CASH, CATHOLICS AND CATASTROPHES

We explore the problems that Charles II had to overcome in order to ensure that the monarchy's return wasn't going to be a short-lived failure

The Treaty of Dover resulted in France's Louis XIV (pictured here in 1701) agreeing to give Charles II a generous subsidy

A LACK OF FUNDS

As part of the agreements worked out at the time of the Restoration, there was one vital asset of the monarchy that parliament was inevitably going to control: the royal purse strings. Charles II depended on being granted funding for the business of his government, and although parliament voted to award him an annual income of around £1.2m, that figure (which was rarely ever paid in full) severely underestimated the true amount of funds that the king needed.

To make up the shortfall, a tax on the number of hearths (fireplaces) in people's households was introduced in 1662, which, in theory, taxed the rich more than the poor. But it proved a deeply unpopular move – as it meant houses could be inspected without warning – and failed to raise as much as had been hoped. Royal debts mounted as the 1660s went on, and Charles complaining of not having enough money only fuelled resentment.

In order to fund his military campaigns, especially the Second Anglo-Dutch War of 1665–67, Charles had to petition parliament time and time again for more money. He did gain an extra source of revenue in 1670 thanks the secret Treaty of Dover (as opposed to the public treaty signed at the same time), in which he secured a six-figure subsidy every year from Louis XIV. But while the payments were likely helpful, their true impact on royal finances has often been overstated.

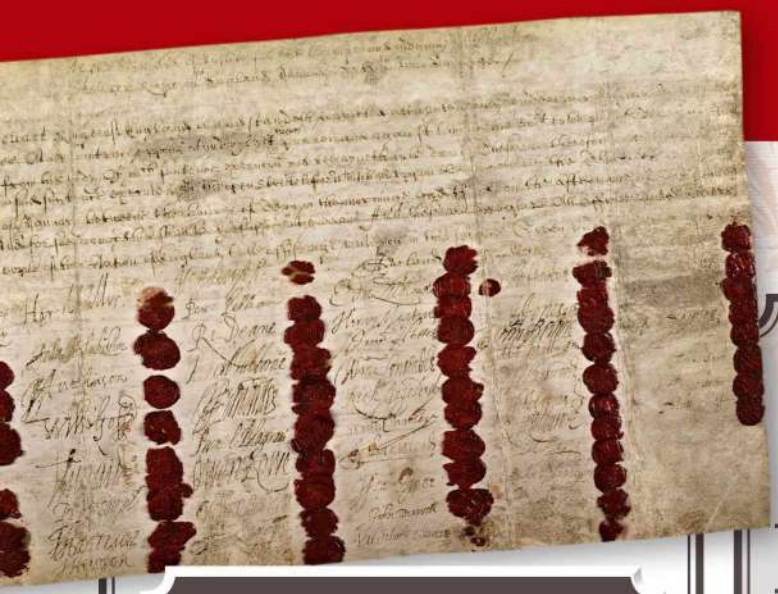
A warship is sunk during the Second Anglo-Dutch War. The two-year conflict drained the royal coffers and ended in defeat for Charles II

DID YOU KNOW?

NAVAL NIGHTMARE

In June 1667, the Dutch launched a raid on a fleet of English ships anchored in the River Medway. Thirteen vessels were sunk and two were seized, including the flagship *Royal Charles*, which was displayed in the port of Hellevoetsluis as a trophy.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2



Charles II doggedly pursued the men who had signed his father's death warrant – although 21 out of the original 59 signatories had already died by time of the Restoration

WHAT TO DO WITH THE REGICIDES

Rather than commit his early reign to revenge, Charles promised to pardon all those who committed crimes during the Civil Wars and Commonwealth periods as a demonstration of unifying his kingdom and to "bury all seeds of future discords". He delivered with the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, passed in 1660. Excluded from the pardons, however, were the 59 men who had signed the death warrant of his father, Charles I – the regicides.

In the intervening years, 21 of the regicides had already died – although that did not prevent the bodies of Oliver Cromwell, his son-in-law Henry Ireton and president of the court John Bradshaw from being exhumed and posthumously decapitated.

Initially, 10 men were hanged, drawn and quartered, with three more following in 1662, while 19 were sentenced to life imprisonment. Others fled, either to various countries in Europe or even to New England in the Americas. That did not mean they were ever safe: an agent of the Crown caught up with and assassinated John Lisle, in hiding in Switzerland, in 1664.

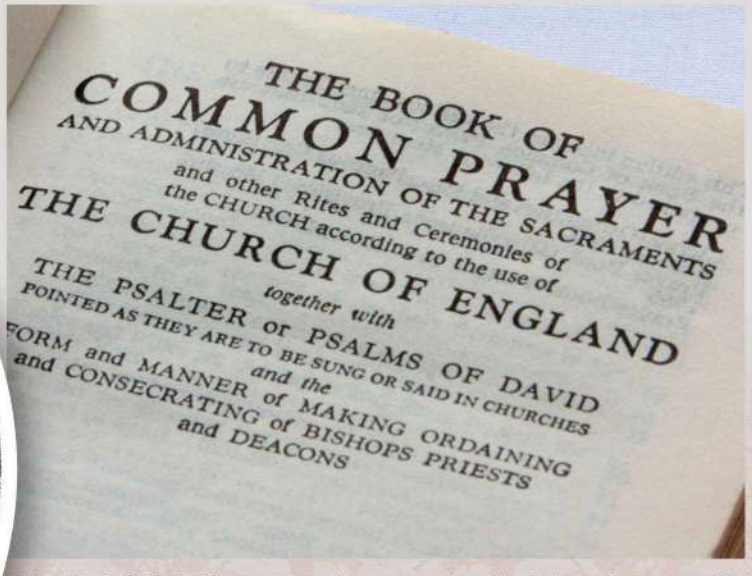
RELIGIOUS DIVISION

From the start of his reign, the most contentious issues Charles had to face were invariably about religion. The divide between him and parliament began before his reign, in fact, since he declared in the months leading up to the Restoration that, under his rule, there would be "a liberty to tender consciences", suggesting a certain freedom of religious worship without fear of persecution.

A pragmatist longing to be seen as a unifier, Charles certainly favoured toleration towards both Protestant nonconformists and Roman Catholics; members of parliament, however, wanted only to establish the Protestant settlement and enforce compliance to the Church of England. To that end, a series of acts, known as the Clarendon Code, imposed strict rules and punishments on those to whom Charles wished to show tolerance.

The Corporation Act of 1661 decreed that all municipal officials had to take Anglican communion; the 1662 Act of Uniformity made use of the *Book of Common Prayer* compulsory – resulting in thousands of Puritan-inclined ministers being forced out of the Church, in what was called the 'Great Ejection'; the Conventicle Act of 1664 clamped down on meetings of nonconformists; and the Five Mile Act of 1665 forbade nonconformist ministers from living or even visiting within five miles of a place where they had previously preached.

In 1672, Charles issued the Declaration of Indulgence to suspend the use of such penal laws, only for parliament to demand it be withdrawn. MPs and peers then passed the Test Act to limit public office to those who received communion in the Church of England. Religion would dictate Charles's relationship with parliament throughout his reign, and influence his foreign policymaking. As part of his alliance with France, he promised to announce his conversion to Roman Catholicism – although he made sure that bit of the treaty was secret and, in the end, he was received into the Catholic Church only on his deathbed.


THE BOOK OF
COMMON PRAYER
AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS
and other Rites and Ceremonies of
the CHURCH according to the use of
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
together with
THE PSALTER or PSALMS OF DAVID
POINTED AS THEY ARE TO BE SUNG OR SAID IN CHURCHES
and the
FORM and MANNER of MAKING ORDAINING
and CONSECRATING of BISHOPS PRIESTS
and DEACONS

Use of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* became compulsory in religious services as a result of the Act of Uniformity – one of four acts that made up the so-called Clarendon Code

PLAGUE AND FIRE

Just a few years into his reign, Charles II had to contend with not one but two back-to-back catastrophes that ravaged London and led many to claim God was punishing the country for the sins of its rulers and people.

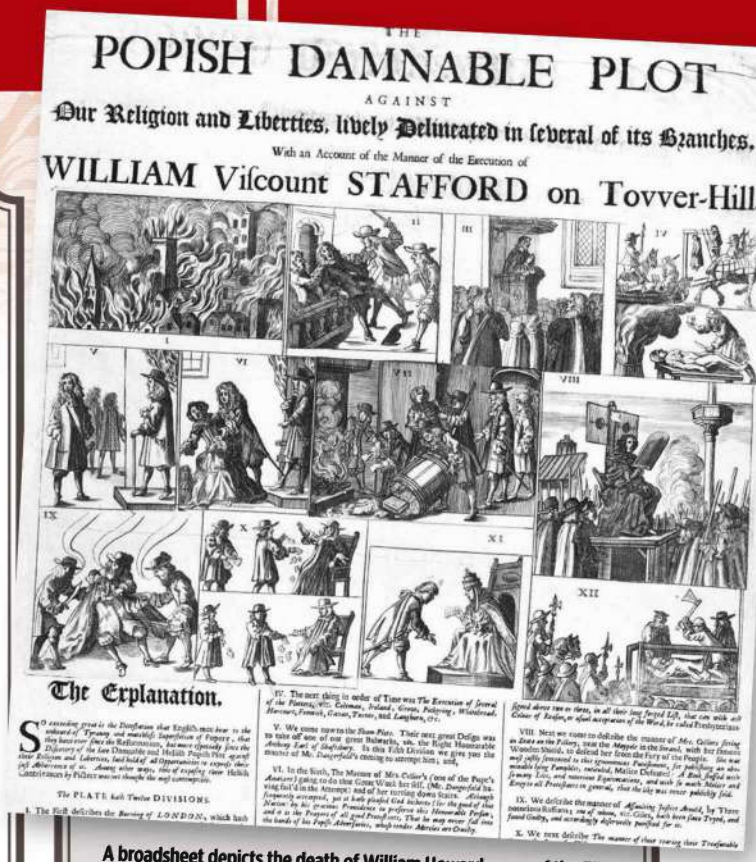
The first was an outbreak of bubonic plague in 1665, which killed as many as 100,000 people (around 20 per cent of the city's population). While the disease spread at a terrifying rate, the king and his court abandoned London for Salisbury, and then Oxford, and he did not return until the following year.

Not long afterwards, the second disaster struck: the Great Fire of London. In just under five days in September 1666, the blaze destroyed more than 13,000 buildings, as well as 87 churches and St Paul's Cathedral, leaving tens of thousands of people homeless.

While the fire blazed, Charles and his brother James were a constant presence as they supervised firefighting efforts and ordered buildings to be pulled down to form firebreaks; or dispatched food and rewarded workers with a purse of 100 guineas. It was a display of authority and compassion that was sorely needed. And, after the fire was finally out, the king enthusiastically supported the colossal task of rebuilding London.

MAIN: **The Great Fire of London destroyed more than 13,000 homes, as well as major landmarks such as St Paul's Cathedral**

BELOW: **The blaze came soon after a devastating outbreak of plague that may have killed up to 20 per cent of London's population**


THE
POPISH DAMNABLE PLOT
AGAINST
Our Religion and Liberties, lively Delineated in several of its Branches.
With an Account of the Manner of the Execution of
WILLIAM Viſcount STAFFORD on Tovver-Hill
The Explanation.

A broadsheet depicts the death of William Howard – one of the 35 people wrongly convicted of treason due to the lies of Titus Oates

ASSASSINATION PLOTS (REAL AND FAKE)

Given the turmoil that had engulfed the country for so long, it could be expected that Charles would have faced countless plots and conspiracies against his reign. In fact, the threat that caused the biggest uproar was completely fictitious. In 1678, news emerged of the so-called Popish Plot, a plan to kill Charles and replace him with his brother James, and so return England to Catholicism.

At the head of the allegations was a former Protestant cleric, and pathological liar, called Titus Oates; and while Charles and his advisors remained highly sceptical of the legitimacy of the plot, anti-Catholic hysteria spread across the country. Out of the fear surrounding Oates's accusations (which even pointed a finger at Charles's queen), 35 innocent people, mainly Jesuits, were executed. Oates would eventually be discredited.

Five years later, in 1683, the Rye House Plot intended to assassinate both Charles and James in order to place the king's illegitimate (and Protestant) son, the Duke of Monmouth, on the throne. The idea was to ambush them on the road as they travelled from the horse races at Newmarket. By chance, however, a fire had forced Charles to leave the races earlier than expected so the attack never took place. Dozens of leading Protestant politicians were implicated, with several high-profile figures ultimately executed.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X3

THE SUCCESSION

By the 1670s, Charles's queen Catherine of Braganza had suffered several miscarriages or stillbirths, and concerns grew as to whether she would bear the king any offspring. While Charles had around a dozen children, they were all from his mistresses, so it looked like his Catholic brother, James, Duke of York, was going to succeed the throne.

To offset fears, Charles agreed for James's Protestant daughter Mary (who had been born before her father's conversion to Catholicism) to marry the Protestant William of Orange, although that did not assuage the fiercest opponents to the idea of a Catholic monarch – chief among them the Earl of Shaftesbury.

In the ensuing Exclusion Crisis, parliament put forward three bills to try and exclude James from the royal line of succession. Each time, Charles refused to accept the bills and dissolved parliament to ensure they never became law. The tensions over the succession led to deep divisions in parliament and the formation of new parties: the pro-exclusion Whigs on one side and the anti-exclusion Tories on the other.

The Whigs tried – and failed – to prevent James, Duke of York from inheriting the throne following Charles II's death

PARLIAMENTARY DISPUTES

Before the Restoration, in the Declaration of Breda, Charles made it clear that he would honour the authority of England's parliament – in striking contrast to his father. The so-called Cavalier Parliament of the first two decades of his reign, however, gradually turned against the king over differences relating to religious toleration, the perceived threat of popery in England, and costly wars.

Charles's alliance with France concerned parliament, too: he sold Dunkirk to Louis XIV in 1662, and his sister Henrietta Anne was married to the French king's brother. In 1668, Charles formed the Triple Alliance with Sweden and the Netherlands, but then two years later signed a treaty with France in which he pledged English support in future conflicts with the Dutch.

It was a culmination of concerns – the growing anti-Catholicism after the Popish Plot, the Exclusion Crisis and the humiliating defeat in the Second Anglo-Dutch War – that made parliament increasingly hostile to Charles. In 1681, he dissolved the Oxford Parliament after a few days amidst yet another attempt to push through an exclusion bill, and he went the rest of his reign without another one: independent, secure and arguably at the height of his power.

WORDS: JONNY WILKES

Charles II depicted arriving in Oxford in March 1681. The king hoped that summoning parliament to meet in the royalist stronghold would hamper the Whigs' efforts to pass an exclusion bill – but he dissolved parliament after a week anyway

DR CLARE JACKSON ON THE RESTORATION'S LASTING LEGACY

Radical ideas that had been preached and published could not be unthought

DR CLARE JACKSON is a historian and senior tutor at Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge. Her books include *Charles II: The Star King* (Allen Lane, 2016) and the award-winning *Devil-Land: England Under Siege, 1588–1688* (Allen Lane, 2021). To hear Dr Jackson discuss the Restoration on the *HistoryExtra* podcast, scan the QR code shown here

The Restoration of King Charles II in 1660 was a monumental turning point in England's history. It followed 20 years of bloody civil wars and constitutional crisis during which a larger proportion of the British and Irish populations died than in both World War I and World War II combined. Between 1649 and 1660, England had also been a republic for the only time in its history.

Charles II's restoration as monarch therefore offers a fascinating case study in post-conflict resolution. Accompanied by official injunctions to forgive and forget, the 'Act of Free and General Pardon, Indemnity and Oblivion' (1660) conferred a general pardon on everyone except a small number of named individuals directly involved in King Charles I's execution in 1649.

But trying to put back the political clock and imagine away two decades in which worlds had been turned upside down was not straightforward. Radical ideas that had been preached and published could not be unthought, and the popular mood was febrile. As the rector of Bath Abbey, Joseph Glanvill, warned in 1667, a "people that rebelled once, and successfully, will be ready to do so often", just "as water that has been boiled, will boil again the sooner".

The restored government faced natural disasters, too, such as the Great Fire of London in 1666 – still a popular feature of the Key Stage 1 national curriculum today. Through Samuel Pepys's eyewitness accounts, primary schoolchildren encounter one of history's most brilliantly evocative diarists who buried his prized Parmesan cheese in his garden to save it from the flames. Significantly, the Fire fanned erroneous suspicions that foreign Catholics had set fire to London, just four years after Charles II's original hopes of offering "a liberty to tender consciences" had been frustrated by the Act of Uniformity (1662), which imposed harsh penalties on Protestant nonconformists. Indeed, the Restoration remained a persecuting society: the last era in English history when the state coercively sought to secure religious uniformity before the Toleration Act was passed in 1689.

The Restoration also saw the emergence of England's first political parties, as 'Tory' defenders of Charles II's monarchy defeated attempts by a 'Whig' opposition in the late 1670s to prevent his brother, James, from inheriting the throne. Succeeding as England's last Catholic monarch in 1685, James II (who was also James VII of Scotland) then embarked on a disastrous attempt to re-Catholicise the British Isles, which led to the armed intervention of his Dutch son-in-law and nephew, William of Orange, three years later.

Haunted by fears of a renewed descent into the bloodbath of civil war, England's political leaders achieved, instead, what generations of historians have acclaimed as the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688–89, which secured the system of Protestant, parliamentary monarchy that still governs England today.

The Act of Uniformity (1662) resulted in thousands of Puritan ministers being forced out of their jobs

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1, CAROLINE MARDON X1

GET HOOKED

If we've whetted your appetite for the Restoration era, why not explore the topic further with our pick of books, podcasts and TV programmes?

BOOKS

Devil-Land: England Under Siege, 1588–1688

By Dr Clare Jackson (Allen Lane, 2021)

Starting on the eve of the Spanish Armada and ending with the 'Glorious Revolution', Jackson's prize-winning work tells the story of a country riven by political faction, religious difference, financial ruin and royal collapse.

To Catch A King: Charles II's Great Escape

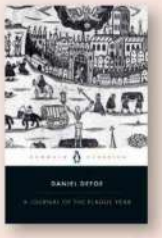
By Charles Spencer (William Collins, 2017)

Using extensive archive material, historian Charles Spencer explores the dramatic tale of Charles II's escape from England, in disguise, following his devastating defeat at the battle of Worcester in 1651.

Mistresses: Sex and Scandal at the Court of Charles II

By Dr Linda Porter (Picador, 2020)

Drawing on a wide variety of original sources, Porter paints a vivid picture of the women who shared Charles II's bed, each of whom wielded influence on both the politics and cultural life of the country.

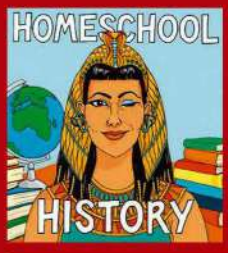


A Journal of the Plague Year

By Daniel Defoe (Penguin Classics, 2003; originally published 1722)

First published in 1722, *A Journal of the Plague Year* is an account of one man's experiences of the year 1665, when bubonic plague struck the city of London and killed tens of thousands of people.

ON THE BBC



BBC SOUNDS

▶ **Homeschool History: the Restoration**
bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000hh0b
Join host Greg Jenner for a rambunctious romp through 17th-century Britain to learn all about Charles II and the restoration of the monarchy.

BBC SOUNDS

▶ **In Our Time: The Royal Society and British Science**
bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b00pk7j0
Melvyn Bragg travels to Wadham College, Oxford (*pictured*), and looks at the origins of the oldest scientific society of them all: the Royal Society.

BBC SOUNDS

▶ **In Our Time: the Restoration**
bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p00547bx
Melvyn Bragg and guests, including Dr Clare Jackson, discuss the impact of Charles II's return to the throne in 1660.

ONLINE AND AUDIO

▶ **For podcasts, features, quizzes, interviews and more on Charles II and the Restoration era, scan the QR code shown here, or visit *historyextra.com/charles-ii***

▶ **The Restoration: everything you wanted to know**
Dr Clare Jackson tackles listener questions on the re-establishment of the monarchy in 1660, after 11 years of Republican rule. Listen at *bit.ly/3gK5Iaa*

▶ **The manhunt for Charles I's killers**
Historical novelist Robert Harris discusses Charles II's hunt for the men who killed his father. Listen at *bit.ly/3gLHCfd*

▶ **The Great Fire of London: everything you wanted to know**
Rebecca Rideal responds to popular questions about the devastating blaze that swept through the capital in 1666. Listen at *bit.ly/3SBZ6bs*

WATCH

Charles II: The Power and the Passion

(now streaming on various platforms)

Rufus Sewell stars as Charles II in this BAFTA-winning, four-part tale of lust, love and loyalty, originally broadcast on BBC One in 2003.

The Stuarts & The Stuarts in Exile

(available on DVD)

These two series, presented by Dr Clare Jackson, examine the rise and fall of the house of Stuart, and the subsequent Jacobite rebellions.

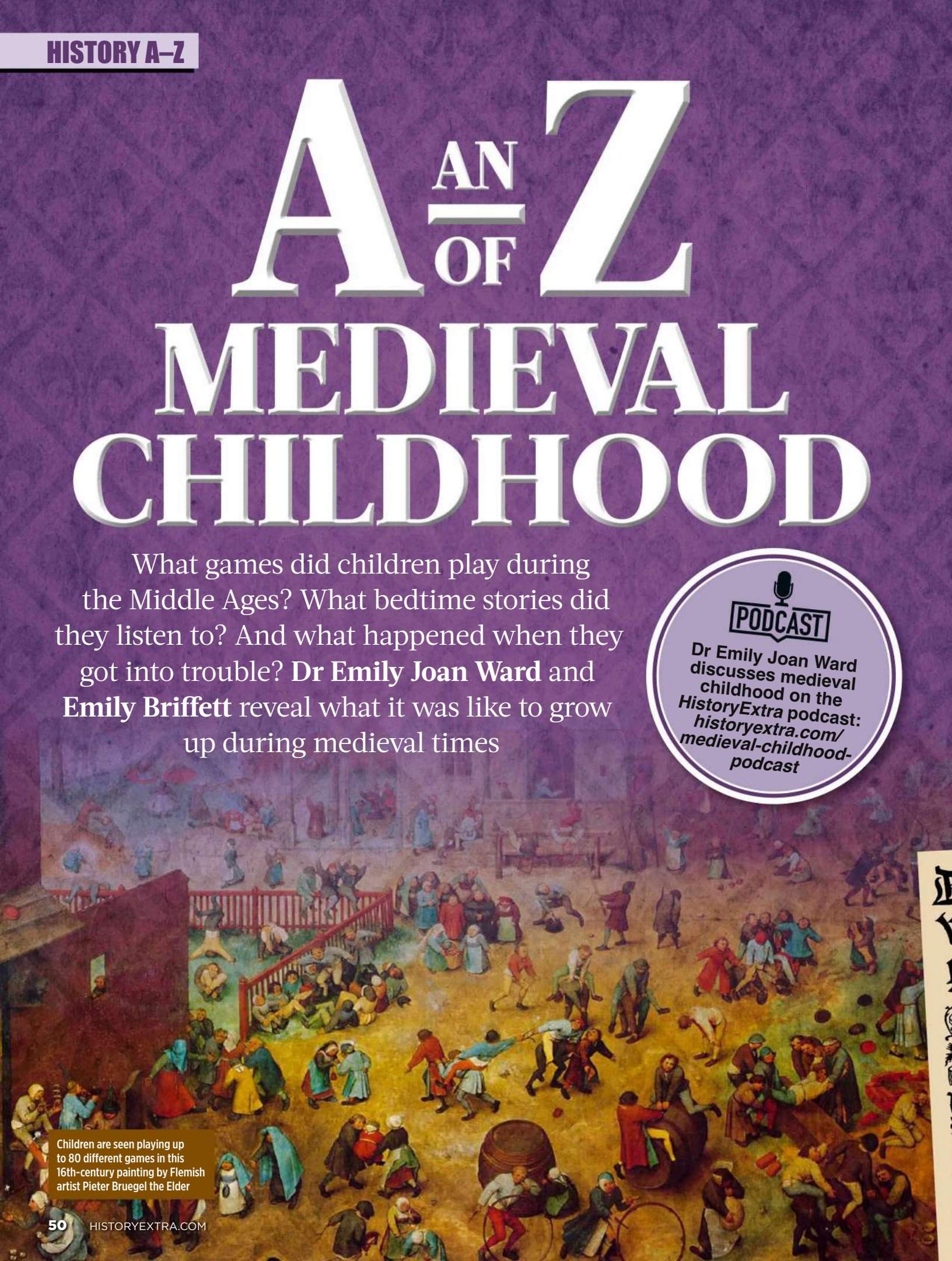
BBC X3, GETTY IMAGES X3

AN A–Z OF MEDIEVAL CHILDHOOD

What games did children play during the Middle Ages? What bedtime stories did they listen to? And what happened when they got into trouble? **Dr Emily Joan Ward** and **Emily Briffett** reveal what it was like to grow up during medieval times

PODCAST

Dr Emily Joan Ward discusses medieval childhood on the HistoryExtra podcast: historyextra.com/medieval-childhood-podcast



Children are seen playing up to 80 different games in this 16th-century painting by Flemish artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder

A is for... *apprenticeships*

▶ When a child reached around 12 to 14 years old in the later Middle Ages (c1300–1500), they could be taken on as an apprentice. For a boy, apprenticeships typically lasted for around seven years until they reached their early twenties, while girls were commonly kept on until marriage. As an apprentice, a child became a part of their master's household: they would have eaten together, socialised with the other children in the household, and been provided with a bed and clothing. In return, the apprentice promised faithful service as well as good behaviour – vowing to forgo inns, gambling and sexual relationships with anyone in the household.

Apprentices learned their trades over the course of several years, and while living in their master's household

B is for... *bedtime stories?*

▼ While there is little evidence of medieval children being read bedtime stories before they went to sleep, they do seem to have been a key part of storytelling culture during the Middle Ages. Some parents even wrote stories and letters for their children to read, such as *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*, which was written by a 14th-century nobleman for his daughters. Full of heroic and dramatic narratives, performances of *chanson de gestes* (epic poems) and romance stories at feasts and in grand halls proved especially exciting for young children. One 13th-century author of conduct literature, Thomasin von Zirclaria, even suggested that these adventure stories could broaden the minds of children.

The title page of *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*, which was written by a French nobleman for his daughters

C is for... *clothing*

Although it is known that infants were usually swaddled in long strips of cloth to protect them, it is unclear what younger children wore after infancy as there is a lack of evidence for toilet training. It's likely that they may have been naked or at least partially clothed until they could control their own bowel movements. From then on, they would have generally worn smaller versions of the clothes worn by adults. This would have involved breeches or stockings, leather shoes, and a long, loose outer garment, such as a woollen or linen gown. Usually, children were bareheaded, but once married, girls would have worn headdresses, too.

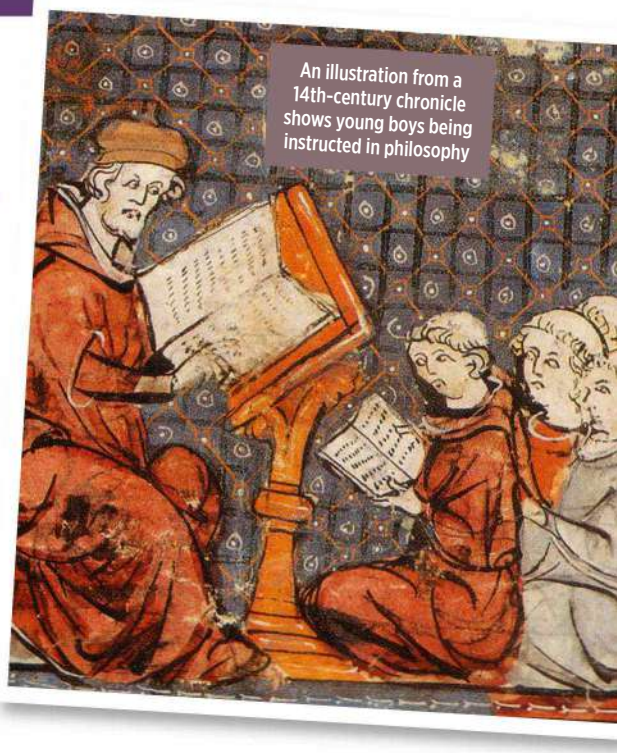
D is for... *discipline*

▶ Beating (*seen above*) and harsh words were accepted ways to teach children, with the main issue being how severe a physical punishment should be. Debates raged in court about what constituted excessive force: if deemed so, the adults responsible for doling out overly harsh discipline were themselves punished. It was also suggested that poor teaching was a reason why a parent or teacher may have resorted to physical chastisement. Guibert of Nogent (c1055–1124) describes how his teacher was unable to explain himself well, so he took it out on his pupil, while Anselm of Canterbury (1033/4–1109) suggested that kindness was more effective in educating children.

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X4

E is for... *education*

▶ The majority of children received an education within their parental home, learning social responsibility as well as moral and religious lessons. There were some opportunities for formal schooling, though these weren't accessible to most. Aged seven, or sometimes younger, boys could be sent off to schooling environments, such as cathedral or grammar schools, and could go on to attend university around the ages of 14 to 16. Girls, on the other hand, were more likely to have a tutor appointed to teach them, or be taught within nunneries. ▶



An illustration from a 14th-century chronicle shows young boys being instructed in philosophy

F is for... *fostering*

Fostering was quite common in medieval Europe, especially amongst elites, and in places such as Ireland and Wales. Young people would be sent by their family to be raised and educated in another person's household.

G is for... *gender*

▶ Childhood play was less gendered than we might assume, especially during the early years when boys and girls played outside in mixed groups. Social status more often dictated the childhood experience than gender, at least at this young age.

It was as children grew older and reached puberty that gender began to have a bigger impact on how they were treated. While young men would have been less concerned about chastity, young girls tended to be closely watched and permitted far fewer freedoms. In advice and conduct literature, the overall teaching was that young women should remain chaste and guard themselves against the temptations of the world, particularly against young men who might lead them astray.

However, medieval ideas about gender roles were not fixed. Like boys, young girls were encouraged to take on apprenticeships, albeit with more flexible contracts that started earlier in life. In the Middle Ages, there was an understanding that girls' development started earlier, which was reflected in the cultural and social roles they took on.

While girls had less freedom than boys, gender roles were not fixed; here, a group of women are seen taking part in a hunt

Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden was the root of the original sin doctrine

"MEDIEVAL IDEAS ABOUT GENDER ROLES WERE NOT FIXED"

H is for... *household chores*

Household economy was especially important in the Middle Ages, which meant that many children would have carried out chores in order to support their families. In households of many children, this regularly included childcare, as the older offspring were expected to look after younger siblings from an early age. Other popular chores involved rural and agricultural tasks associated with the yearly calendar, as well as animal husbandry, with boys looking after horses, cows, pigs and geese. At harvest time, younger children may have helped with picking the fruit, while the older ones would have helped with ploughing and mowing. Chores were appropriate to children's ages – there was no expectation for a child to plough a field at the age of six.

I is for... *innocence*

▲ Two conflicting ideas concerned the issue of childhood innocence in the Middle Ages, each drawing on a different biblical passage. Some theologians and writers saw childhood as a time of purity, with sin therefore associated with the onset of puberty when lust and passion could lead to the loss of innocence. Others thought that children were inherently sinful from conception, an argument strongly promoted by theologian Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430). This idea of original sin stemmed all the way back to the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, and was believed to have then been conveyed from father to son. Yet even the people arguing this viewpoint had to acknowledge that children lacked the ability to express their sin in the same way as adults.

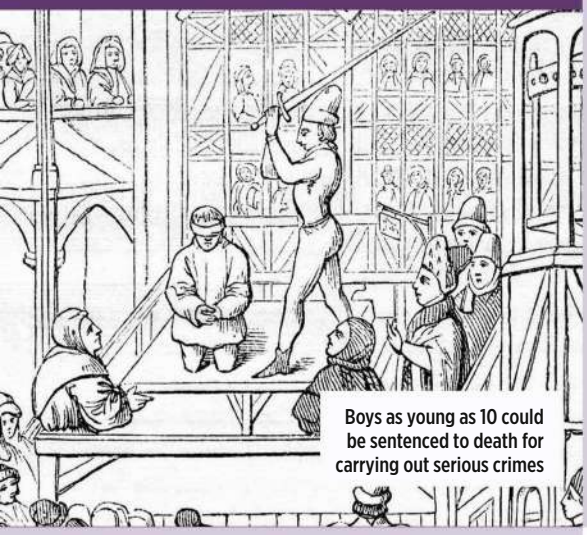
J is for... *jobs*

As well as helping out around the home, children were expected to get involved in the family trade. For example, fingerprints found on pots suggest that young children used their small and nimble hands to perform fine, detailed work, such as moulding handles. Not only would this have brought in extra income for the household, but it would have prepared children for a lifetime of work as an adult.

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X6

K is for... *knowledge of action*

▼ During the Middle Ages, the age of criminal responsibility ranged from 10 to 15 years old, but an important factor when considering a punishment for a child was 'knowledge of action'. In 1299, for example, a 10-year-old boy in England was handed the death sentence for the murder of a young girl, since he had shown enough awareness that what he had done was morally wrong by hiding her body.



Boys as young as 10 could be sentenced to death for carrying out serious crimes

A woodcut of a school in Germany. More people were literate during the Middle Ages than might be assumed

L is for... *literacy*

▲ While it is not possible to estimate the proportion of literate people in medieval society, it is likely that by 1300, far more people had access to some form of basic literacy than we might assume today. Learning to read and write Latin would have been common among the children of the elite, and learning the vernacular was accessible to all. Most children would have had some knowledge of the alphabet. However, other skills were often prioritised. Memory seems to have been seen as a far more important asset for children: young boys learning books of poems by heart appears to have been more common than learning to write their names.

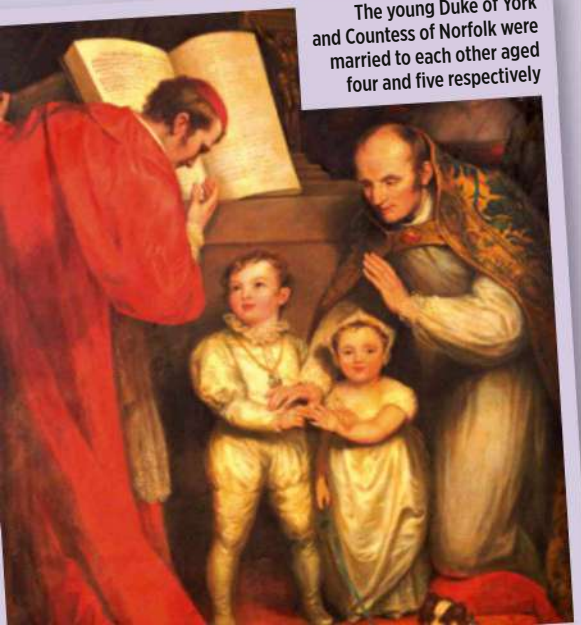
M is for... *mortality*

▼ Figures for infant mortality are difficult to calculate: it is estimated that 30–50 per cent of medieval children would have died young. In one study of the English royal family, less than half of the 96 children born between the 12th and 16th centuries survived through to their twenties, and more than one-third died in their first year. In the first year of life, children faced plenty of risks, from disease and fire to cradle death. Animals knocked over cradles, and sometimes even devoured the infant occupants. Toddlers could drown or be struck down by horses. However, accidental death seemed to drop off by the age of four, as this would have been when children received the greatest supervision as they were taught tasks in the home.

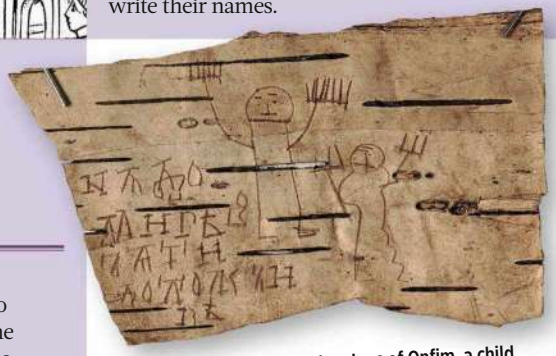
A mother and baby pictured alive and well. Sadly, not all medieval births ended with such happy scenes

N is for... *nuptials*

▼ From the mid-12th century, children between 12 and 14 were able to consent to marriage. This did not mean that everyone married this young, however. Most people married later or, in some cases, not at all. Young adolescents had the legal and canonical power to choose.



The young Duke of York and Countess of Norfolk were married to each other aged four and five respectively



The drawings of Onfim, a child who lived in what is now Russia, are around 800 years old

O is for... *Onfim*

▲ In the 1950s, excavations just outside of the city of Novgorod (in modern-day Russia) uncovered a collection of more than 900 birchbark texts, dating from the 11th to the 15th centuries. In this collection were classroom jottings, including alphabets, syllabic and phonetic exercises, and around 17 doodles from a child called Onfim, who lived in the early 13th century.

Onfim drew stick figures of warriors on horseback and wild beasts. He also wrote little notes for friends and classmates, such as "greetings from Onfim to Danilo". Not much is known about this named youngster, but his drawings provide an interesting insight into how children learned the alphabet and behaved in the medieval classroom.

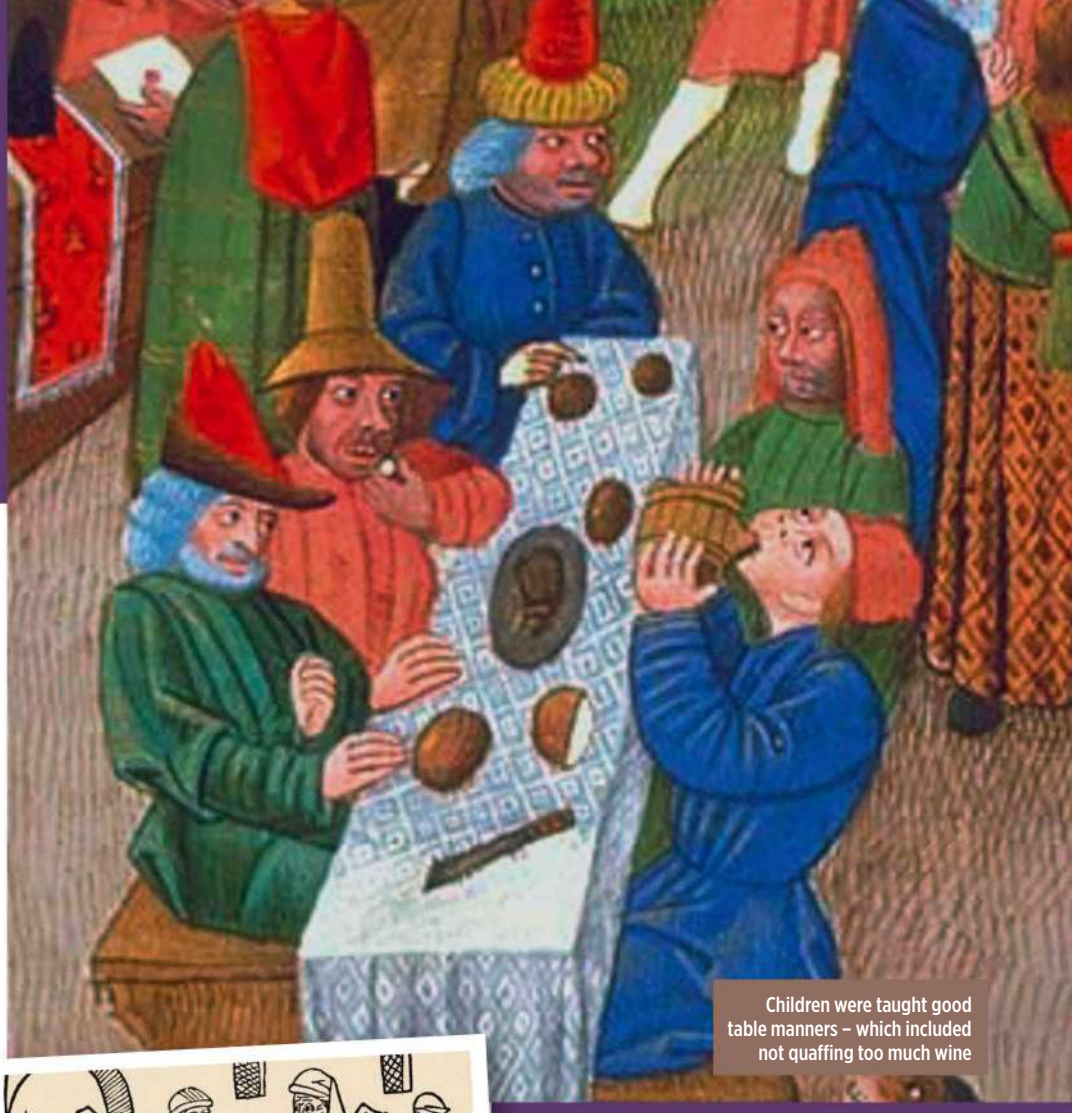
P is for... *play*

▼ As has been mentioned already, there was an expectation for children to help around the home. That did not mean they were occupied from morning to dusk, however, so they did have opportunities to play with friends, family and animals. One 12th-century cleric, Gerald of Wales, describes playing on the sand with his brother outside his father's castle. Many games were intended to provide children with a knightly education or train them for adult life. From imitating battles to mastering board games, it was hoped this would teach them the skills needed to participate in society. ▶

Two women playing backgammon in an illustration from the 13th-century *Libro de los Juegos* (Book of Games)

Q is for... *quaffing*

▶ Sources offer up plenty of examples of medieval children being greedy and eating far too quickly. Conduct literature of the era talks about the ways in which children should behave at the table, from not sucking up soup loudly to not drinking too much wine.



Children were taught good table manners – which included not quaffing too much wine

R is for... *rural versus urban experiences*

One factor that would have significantly altered a child's experience was whether they grew up in a rural or urban environment. This affected the type of diseases that they could catch; the working environments they were trained in; how they played; and the possible causes of accidental death. The growth of towns and cities over time saw an increased institutionalisation in opportunities for young people, including the formation of universities. With the expansion in working environments, too, apprenticeships became increasingly formalised with the introduction of contracts and indenture records.

S is for... *sugar (and other sweeteners)*

▼ Children of this era also seem to have loved sweet things, though not in the guises we might be familiar with today. Many seem to have enjoyed fruit: some sources describe parents using apples to appease their children, or of children stealing apples from orchards.

Up until the 13th century, sugar wasn't readily available and even then, it would have been confined to the elite. This meant that the main sweetener of the Middle Ages would have been honey. Soaking bread in honeyed milk to make 'pap' was a common recommendation of 13th-century physicians for weaning children on to solid food. When children could chew, they might move on to tarts made of bread and sugar as a sweet treat. Illnesses were treated with sugar, too, especially for noble or royal children – twisted sticks of natural sugar were believed to cure sickness.

A number of toys can be seen in this 15th-century woodcut, including a hobby horse

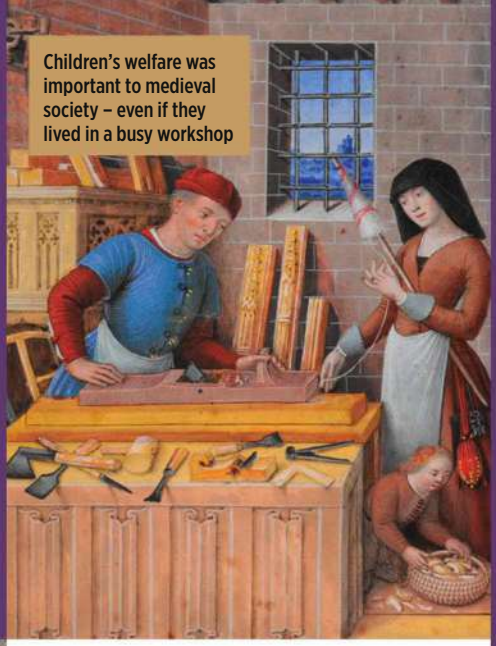
T is for... *toys*

▲ When it came to toys in playtime, it is likely that children relied on natural items, such as shells, pebbles and feathers. One hagiographical text describes Waldef/Waltheof (c1095–1159), the later abbot of Melrose, as a child gathering twigs and branches with his brother to play with. While Waldef's brother is said to have made toy castles and played soldiers like other boys, Waldef apparently made churches out of stones and pretended to be a priest. Manufactured toys – dolls, spinning tops or lead knights and horses – appeared only much later in the Middle Ages. However, there are earlier examples made out of wood and bone in the shape of small boats, weapons and animals.

U is for... *unruliness*

▼ Children in the past also got in trouble for raucous behaviour – and on occasion they got away with it! That was the case in one story from the 12th-century *Ramsay Abbey Chronicle*. Four boys being educated at the abbey were playing outside the cloister and pulling the bell ropes for fun, when they cracked one of the bells. The monks were livid, but the abbot rationalised their behaviour and explained that if the boys were punished too harshly then they might take their revenge upon the abbey in later life, instead of bestowing generous gifts as it was hoped they would do once they grew up.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X6



Children's welfare was important to medieval society – even if they lived in a busy workshop

V is for... *voices*

▼ It is difficult to access the 'voices' of medieval children directly. Although there are plenty of documentary sources describing children's lives, including legal records, saints' lives and parental advice literature, we are left with a silence surrounding many childhood feelings and experiences. Some of the most vivid evidence we have regarding medieval childhood comes from material culture, from small fingerprints left on wax seals to graffiti scrawled by the young.

This series of geometric shapes was found scratched into a wall at a church in Yaxley, Suffolk

W is for... *welfare*

▲ There was a clear social, cultural and legal understanding that children needed to be protected. Blame for children's actions was often attributed to their parents or caregivers (especially mothers) rather than the children themselves. It was also suggested that young people should be protected with education and schooling. Writing about the education of elite boys, Giles of Rome (1243–1316) suggested that children shouldn't be allowed to see the paintings or carvings of naked women until they were much older, fearing it might influence their development.

X is for... *eXtraterrestrials?*

William of Newburgh (1136–1198) tells a story of a young girl and a boy who emerged from several ancient ditches outside the Suffolk village of Woolpit. Their skin was green, they spoke an unrecognisable language, and their clothing was strange. The locals brought them back to their village and, after time, the children gradually accepted normal food and lost their green colouring. When they finally learned how to speak English, they claimed that they were from an underground country called St Martin's Land, where the sun neither rose nor set. Whether these children were from another country, suffered a dietary deficiency, or were really from another planet has been a widely debated topic over the years.

Woolpit's village sign contains a depiction of the 'green children' who allegedly turned up there in the 12th century

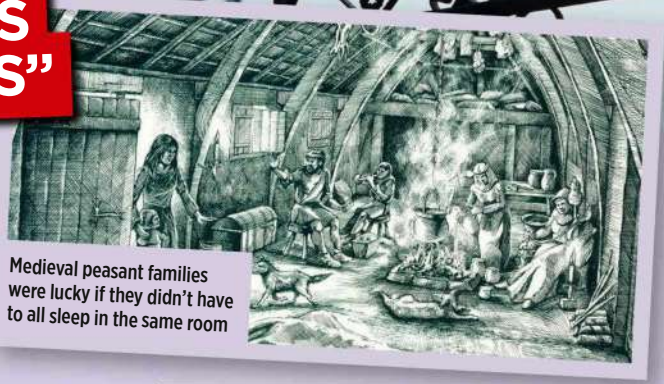
"ADOLESCENCE SOMETIMES EXTENDED INTO A PERSON'S TWENTIES OR EVEN THIRTIES"

Y is for... *years*

In the medieval mindset, childhood was divided up into clear stages. The first was between the ages of zero and seven and was called *infantia* (meaning 'incapable of speech' in Latin), when children were neither able to articulate fully nor understand things conceptually. From seven until 12 years old (for girls) and 14 (for boys) was the main stage of childhood, called *pueritia* in Latin, or 'purity'. These stages influenced what children could do at certain stages in life and how they were represented in legal texts. It was recognised that a child didn't suddenly become an adult overnight. Adolescence sometimes extended into a person's twenties or even thirties.

Z is for... *zzz*

▶ Since communal sleeping arrangements were the norm, it was markedly rare for children to have their own bedroom. Babies would have slept in cradles, but older children would have shared a room or bed with other members of their family and household. Sleep could sometimes lead children into trouble. One 12th-century miracle collection from Scotland tells how a six-year-old boy fell asleep while looking after his father's lambs. Four women appeared in his dreams and gave him something to drink. When he woke, his throat was swollen and he remained unable to speak for 16 years until he was cured at the saint's shrine.



Medieval peasant families were lucky if they didn't have to all sleep in the same room

DR EMILY JOAN WARD is a British Academy postdoctoral fellow at the University of Edinburgh and the author of *Royal Childhood and Child Kingship* (Cambridge University Press, 2022). This article was adapted from a *HistoryExtra* interview with Dr Ward (*see below*) by Emily Briffett

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LISTEN
Dr Emily Joan Ward discusses medieval childhood on the *HistoryExtra* podcast. Scan the QR code shown here or visit *history extra.com/medieval-childhood-podcast*

WHAT GREAT PAINTINGS SAY

Science and art combine to create a mystical depiction of the birth of Christ

The Nativity

by Piero della Francesca, early 1480s

Compared with the sumptuous Nativity scenes of Renaissance artists such as Sandro Botticelli or Andrea Mantegna, Piero della Francesca's depiction of the birth of Christ, with its muted sandy-brown tones, appears deceptively simple. Indeed, when it was acquired by the National Gallery in 1874, it was thought to be an unfinished work.

"Patches of damage to the paint layers and visible areas of underdrawing had led to the idea that the work was unfinished," says Laura Llewellyn, acting curator of Italian paintings before 1500 at the National Gallery. "But this is actually the result of damage caused by misguided restoration attempts before the painting came into the Gallery's care. We've spent three years carefully restoring the work and it's now ready to go back on public show, just in time for Christmas."

The Nativity (the unrestored version of which is shown here) was one of Piero's final works, painted around 10 years before his death in 1492, and created not according to the wishes of a demanding patron, but to hang in his own family palace in the Tuscan town of Sansepolcro. Rather than set the scene in Bethlehem, according to the Gospel, the artist has placed the holy family on a rocky, desolate outcrop above a landscape reminiscent of his own hometown.

"The relationship between the moment of Christ's birth and the mystical vision depicted in Piero's work was inspired by the writings of Saint Bridget of Sweden, the 14th-century mystic whose visions of the Virgin giving birth instantly and without pain had a profound effect on the iconography of the Nativity in Renaissance art," says Llewellyn. "From the 15th century, representations of Mary moved from images of her resting in bed after the birth, accompanied by midwives, to that which we see here: serenely kneeling before the Christ child who lies naked on the ground in front of her, arms outstretched towards his mother, just as Saint Bridget had written."

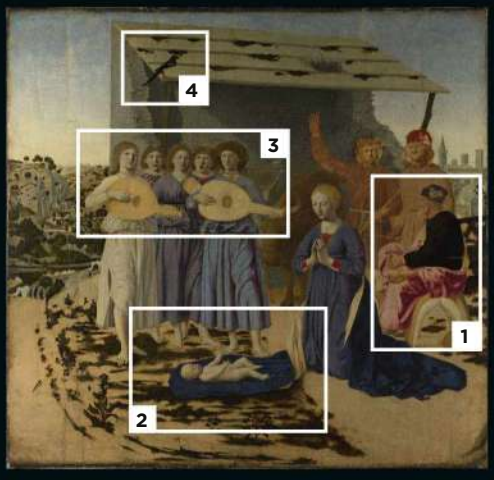
MATHEMATICAL PRECISION

As well as being a skilled artist, Piero was also a keen mathematician, a partnership that, according to Llewellyn, is evident in the way in which he constructed space in his paintings. "Much as it was for Leonardo da Vinci, science and painting were one and the same for Piero," she continues. "He was an incredibly precise painter: mathematical precision underpins the composition – from the spatial arrangement of the figures to the perspective of the slightly skewed, ramshackle shelter – helping to create the serene monumentality and intangible stillness of this incredible work."

WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN

GET HOOKED

The Nativity will be back on public display at the National Gallery, London, from 1 December: *nationalgallery.org.uk*



1. JOSEPH
Joseph's pose is drawn from a famous ancient statue known as the *Spinario*, in which a young boy pulls a thorn from his foot.

2. CHRIST
New shoots and plants are seen growing beneath the baby Jesus, symbolising the birth of a new age.

3. HEAVENLY HOST
A group of angels dressed in classical clothing sing and play lutes at the birth. Even the donkey lifts its head to bray in unison.

4. MAGPIE
The incessant chatter of the magpie has been silenced by the music and stillness of the scene.

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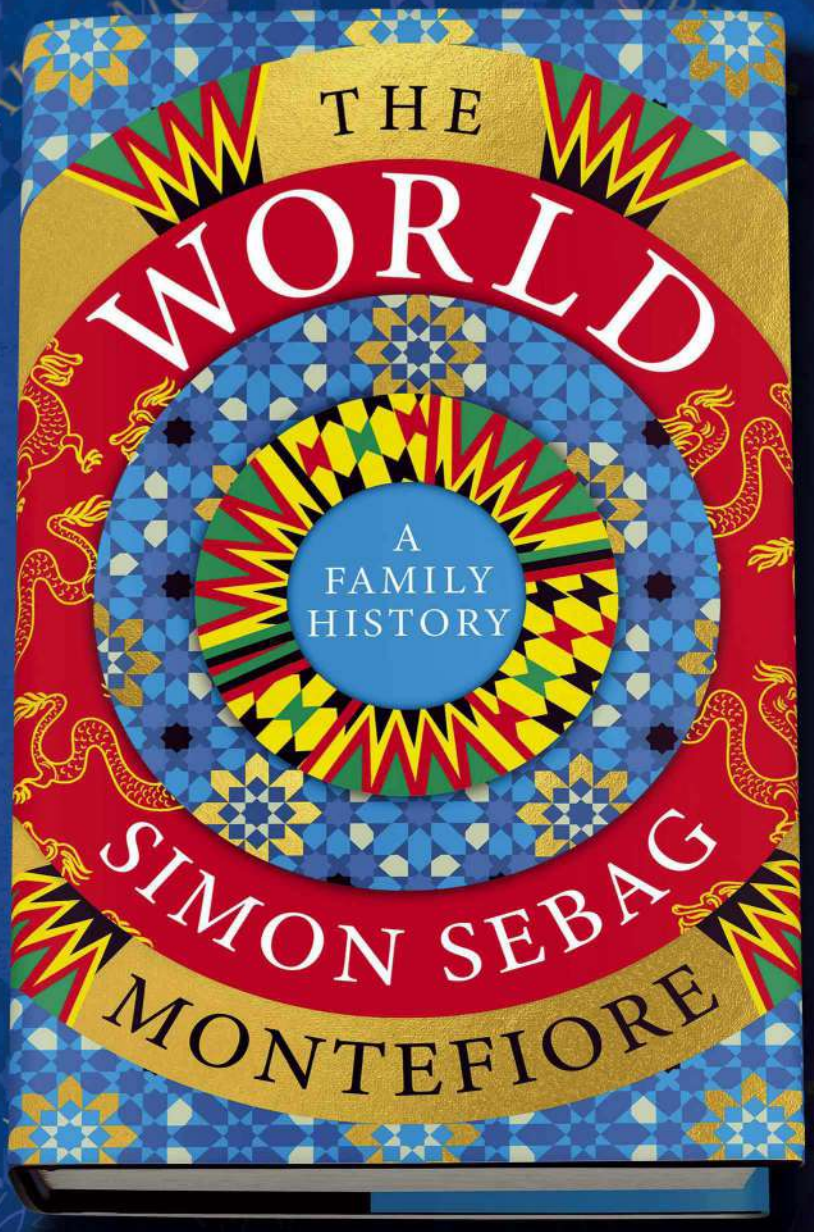

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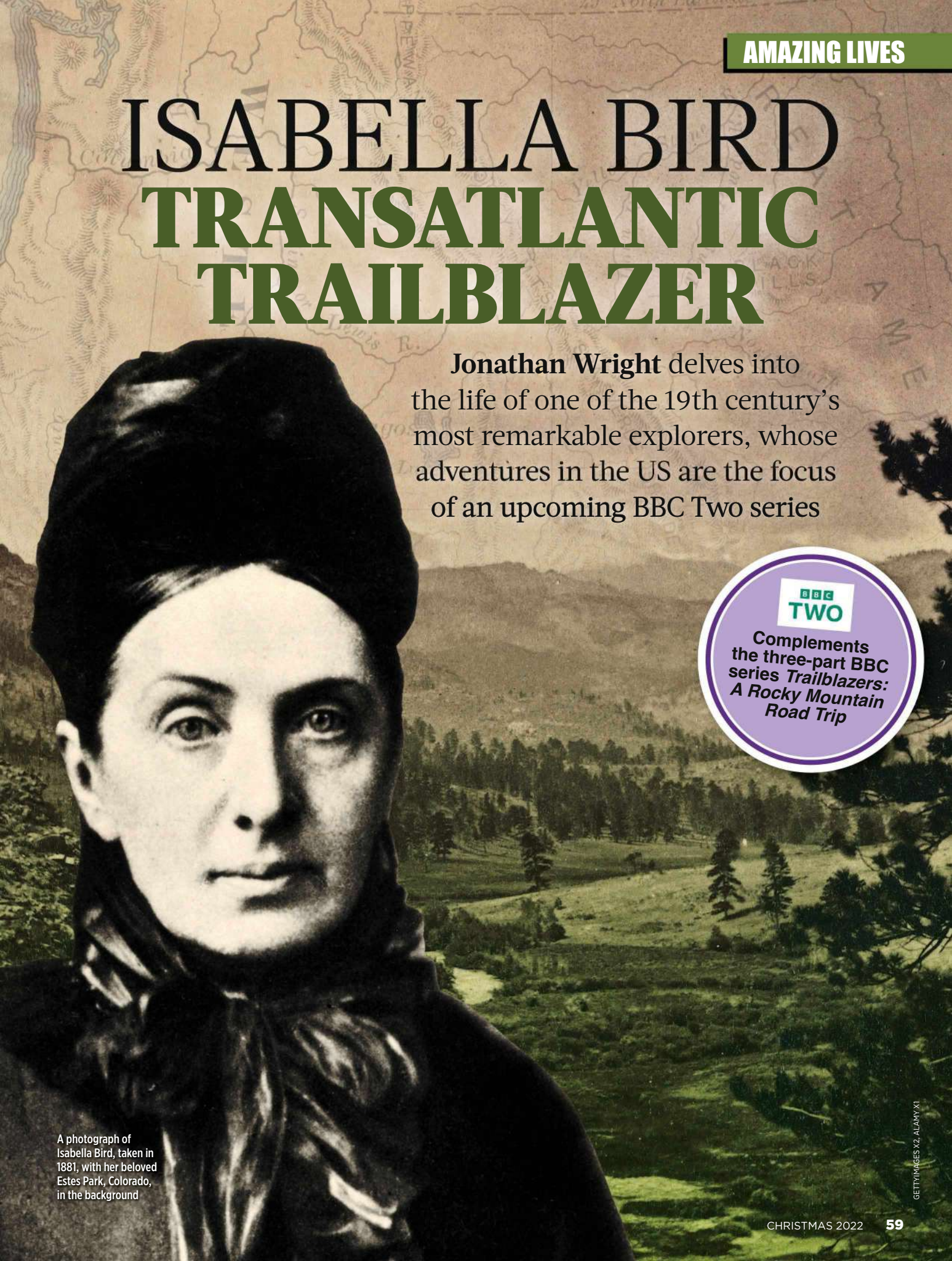
ISABELLA BIRD
TRANSATLANTIC TRAILBLAZER

Jonathan Wright delves into the life of one of the 19th century's most remarkable explorers, whose adventures in the US are the focus of an upcoming BBC Two series

BBC TWO

Complements the three-part BBC series *Trailblazers: A Rocky Mountain Road Trip*



A photograph of Isabella Bird, taken in 1881, with her beloved Estes Park, Colorado, in the background

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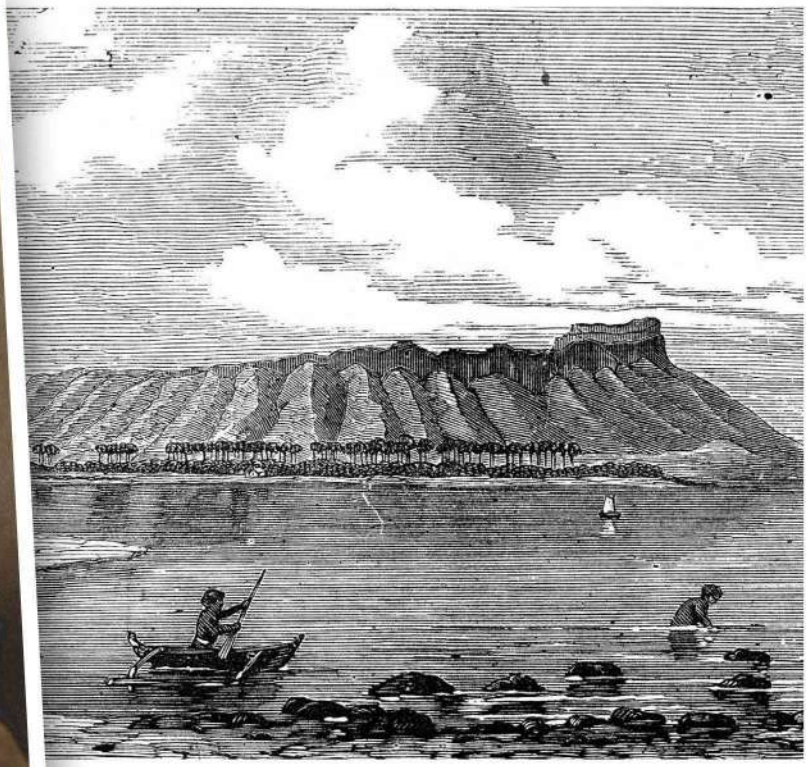

LEFT: **Isabella Bird, pictured here in 1880, overcame a sickly childhood to travel the world**

ABOVE: **The Diamond Head volcanic cone in Hawaii as it appeared in 1873. Bird first set foot on the Pacific archipelago in the same year**

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It was in the year 1873 and aboard the paddle steamer *Nevada* that Isabella Bird's life changed decisively, at the moment that it so easily could have been ended. Two days into a voyage from New Zealand to the US state of California, a hurricane hit the ship, which was aged, leaky, infested with rats, and in no condition to withstand a battering. For a while, it looked as if the *Nevada* might break apart and be lost entirely.

For the passengers and crew, it was a terrifying experience. Yet rather than give in to fear, Bird, a Yorkshire-born spinster in her early forties hitherto facing middle age in a fug of unhappiness that visiting Australia and New Zealand had done little to lift, revelled in what was happening. "It is so like living in a new world, so free, so fresh, so vital, so careless, so unfettered, so full of interest that one grudges being asleep," she later wrote, after the hurricane passed with the *Nevada* still seaworthy, in one of her letters to her sister, Henrietta, whom she affectionately called 'Hennie'.

Bird spent much of the journey across the Pacific helping one Mrs Dexter care for her son, who was grievously ill after rupturing a blood vessel in his lungs. Mrs Dexter planned to alight at the Sandwich Islands, the archipelago now known as Hawaii, for her son to receive medical treatment, and she asked her new friend to accompany them. Bird readily agreed; her sense of adventure and, as a minister's daughter with a strong morality, her sense of duty in alignment.

During her six months there, the feeling of "unfettered" freedom she found during the hurricane bloomed. Bird had visited a number of places around the world before – and had written of her experiences, most notably in her popular travel memoir *The Englishwoman in America* (1856) – but it was in Hawaii that she shook off the shackles of convention in earnest.

The woman celebrated today as an explorer, globetrotter, mountaineer, photographer, cowpoke and expert horsewoman, friend to Wild West outlaws and the nomadic Berbers of Morocco, a founder of hospitals, a reported inspiration to suffragettes, and one of the first female fellows of the Royal Geographical Society, truly began to invent herself.

DID YOU KNOW?

A DRESSING DOWN

When a review of one of Isabella Bird's books described her as riding in "masculine" clothing, she angrily wrote a note to be added to later editions clarifying that she wore a "thoroughly serviceable and feminine costume".

Bird's accomplishments were all the more remarkable given that she was born, in 1831, during the reign of Queen Victoria's predecessor, William IV, hardly an era when women were encouraged to be independent.

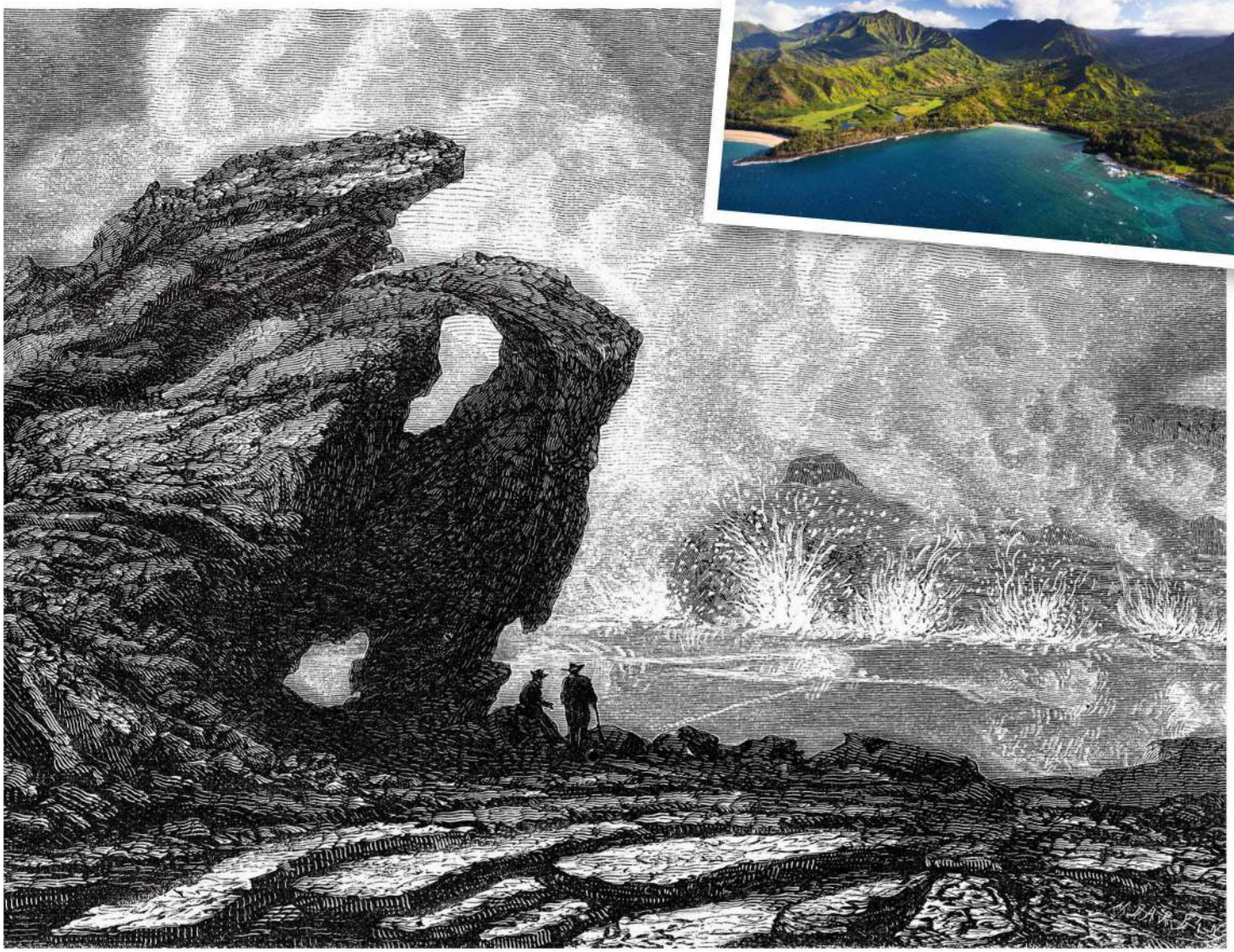
A LOVE OF OUTDOORS

She had to contend from an early age with a disruptive upbringing as her father, Reverend Edward Bird, moved the family around the country. Often, his transfers were the result of his principled and staunch resistance to Sunday labour or trading, which led to him falling out with many of his parishioners.

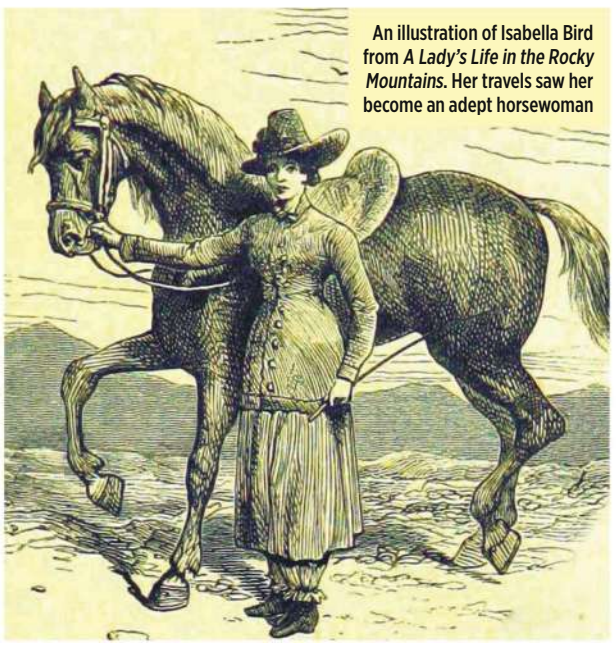
Adapting to each new place, Bird grew up bright, curious and outspoken, but she was also a sickly child, suffering from severe back pains, as well as nervous headaches and insomnia. In 1850, she needed an operation to remove a "fibrous tumour" from the spinal area. More happily, much of the medical advice she received encouraged her to be outside as much as possible taking in the fresh air, so she spent many hours riding horses or rowing, and learning to love the outdoors. Alongside her home schooling in an eclectic range of subjects, her father, a knowledgeable botanist, taught her extensively about plants too.

In short: Bird's early life was unusual, and so perhaps the best possible preparation for her time in the Hawaiian archipelago. After helping Mrs Dexter and her son to settle amidst the expats at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Honolulu, she was keen to head off the beaten

RIGHT: **Bird spent a total of six months in Hawaii, or the Sandwich Islands as Europeans knew them at the time**
BELOW: **A 19th-century engraving of Kīlauea volcano – one of the many Hawaiian sites of interest she visited**



"She was keen to head off the beaten track, to escape a polite society whose mores she treated with suspicion"



An illustration of Isabella Bird from *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*. Her travels saw her become an adept horsewoman

track, to escape a polite society whose mores she rarely challenged directly, but nevertheless treated with suspicion.

She made her way to Hilo, little more than a large village at this point and home to Luther Severance, son of a US congressman serving as the local postmaster. Staying with him and his family, Bird began to explore the area on horseback, but it soon looked like she would have to give it up as riding sidesaddle, in what was then seen as a ladylike fashion, caused her debilitating backache. Severance intervened, asking why she did not use a Mexican saddle, designed for the rigours of life outdoors and on which she could sit astride a horse. Anxious to ride as far as the relatively inaccessible Kīlauea volcano, Bird decided to give it a go. It was an instant improvement. She could gallop into the wilds (although for the rest of her life she would nod to convention by riding side-saddle in towns and cities) and became such an adept horsewoman that locals on the island of Kauai called her *paniola*, or 'cowboy'.

Considering her most famous book today is *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879), based on letters written to Hennie from the US frontier, this nickname turned out to be prescient. ▶

Hawaii prepared Bird for life in the Rockies in another way: mountaineering. She ascended Mauna Loa, which rises to more than 4,100 metres, in the company of William Green, the acting British consul and a keen volcanologist. This involved traversing lava fields and a night spent in a tent near the crater.

As a writer with a reporter's eye, Bird rarely indulged in mysticism or flights of fancy, but she made an exception after getting up early to sit alone atop the unquiet volcano. She wrote of the awesome sight: "How far it was from all the world, uplifted above love, hate and storms of passion and war and wreck of thrones, and dissonant clash of human thought, serene in the eternal solitudes."

ROCKY TRAILS

Her time in Hawaii eventually resulted in a new book, *Six Months among the Palm Groves, Coral Reefs, and Volcanoes of the Sandwich Islands* (1875), but soon it was time for Bird to be on her way. On 7 August 1873, she boarded the mail steamer *Costa Rica* and sailed for San Francisco. From a city that had grown rapidly during California's gold rush, she took a train east, as far as Greeley, Colorado, to pioneer country. The territory, which would not achieve statehood until 1876, was attractive to farmers due to its vast plains, but Bird did not come for agriculture. She wanted to see and explore the Rockies.

In particular, she longed to reach the unspoilt valley of Estes Park, which she had heard about from local mountain men. It took several attempts to get there. The first was with the Chalmers family, settlers from Illinois, but ended when it became apparent that the head of the household had little idea of where he was going and few of the skills of an outdoorsman. Bird herself had to take charge and guide everyone back.

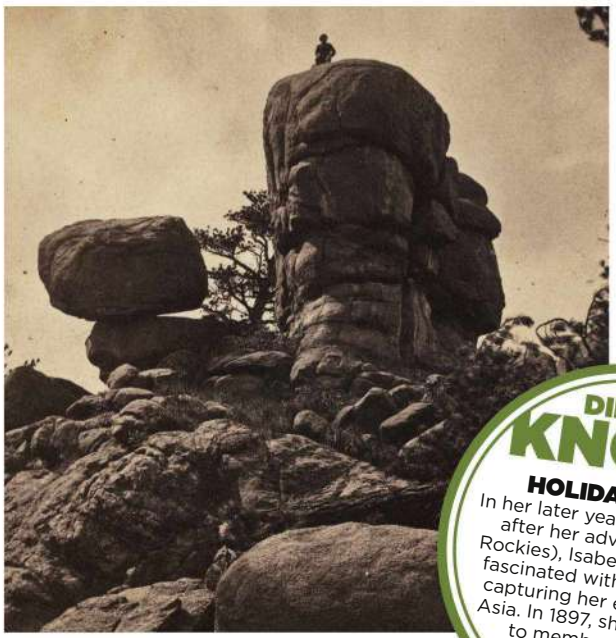
She then went to stay with a family called the Hutchinsons. While with them, she threw herself into physical work, so much so that an ox-team driver mistook her for "the new hired girl", a comment that delighted her, since it emphasised how fit and full of life she had become. That was despite the man adding of Bird, who stood at 4ft 11in: "Bless me, you're awful small!"

She was fit enough, it turned out, to make it to Estes Park finally, this time in the company of two sullen men who knew the trails. Here was true wilderness where only a few hardy settlers lived, dividing their time between ranching and acting as guides to visiting hunters. One of these was Griffith Evans, a Welshman in whose log cabin Bird stayed.

MOUNTAIN MAN

The man who, by far, had the biggest presence in her life, however, was Jim Nugent, or 'Rocky Mountain Jim'. While he could be charming and spin tall tales, he was a hard drinker with a reputation for being vindictive and violent. Aged around 45, he was also short an eye following an encounter with a grizzly bear. "The loss made one side of the face repulsive," wrote Bird, "while the other might have been modelled in marble. 'Desperado' was written in large letters all over him."

Jim was dangerous, although around Bird he tried to be on his best behaviour. He acted as guide when she climbed the 4,346-metre-tall Longs Peak, an undertaking so treacherous that she later



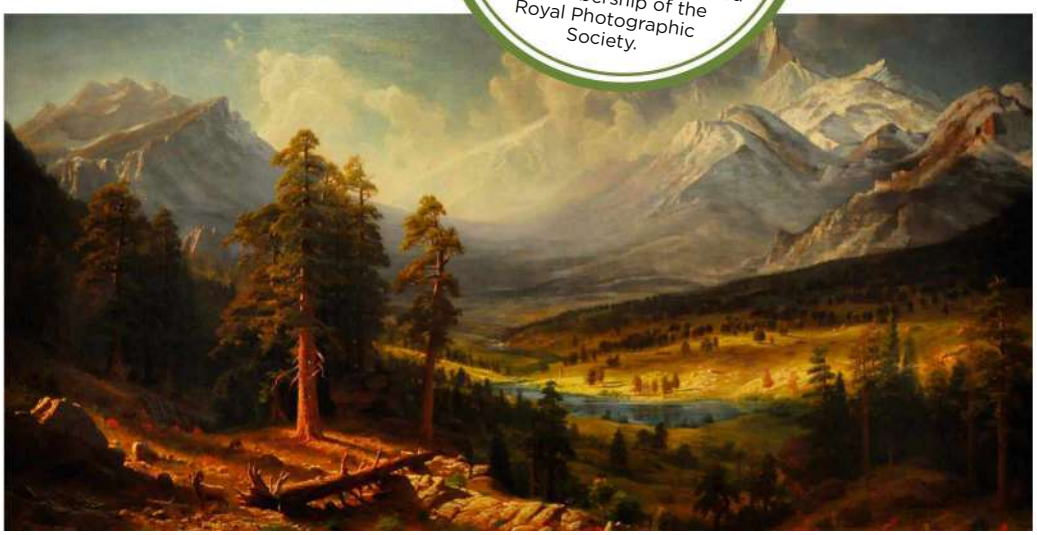
BELOW LEFT: **A rock formation referred to as 'The Elephant' in Estes Park, Colorado. Bird was determined to visit the park during her 1873 adventure**

BELOW RIGHT: **The ranch of Welshman Griffith Evans, where Bird stayed following her arrival in Estes Park**

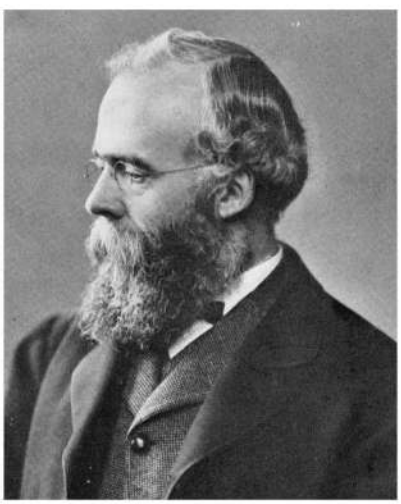
DID YOU KNOW?

HOLIDAY SNAPS

In her later years (unfortunately after her adventures in the Rockies), Isabella Bird became fascinated with photography, capturing her experiences in Asia. In 1897, she was elected to membership of the Royal Photographic Society.



An 1877 painting of Estes Park by Albert Bierstadt. "In everything it exceeds all my dreams," wrote Bird, when describing the park



Back in Britain, Bird would marry the successful Edinburgh surgeon Dr John Bishop in 1881

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LEFT: **A photograph taken by Bird of the boat on which she explored the Yangtze River in China**

BELOW: **Another snap shows men carrying Bird's bags following her arrival in a Chinese village**

"As a woman of letters, Bird had brought the wonders and beauties of the world to Victorian Britain"

noted: "Had I known that the ascent was a real mountaineering feat I should not have felt the slightest ambition to perform it." Roped together, Jim sometimes literally dragged Bird upwards "like a bale of goods by sheer force of muscle". The final vertiginous ascent was a painstaking climb up a "smooth, cracked face or wall of pink granite". On the way down, an exhausted Bird fell several times and "once hung by my frock, which caught on a rock". Jim cut her free, whereupon she landed in "a crevice full of soft snow".

Jim doted on Bird, but she remained far too practical to imagine they could share a life. She was right to be wary. Bird went on to explore the Rockies as a lone traveller and rode for hundreds of miles in the wilderness, gaining international fame in the process for her writings, while Jim didn't make it past 1874. He was shot in the head, perhaps by Griffith Evans with whom he had long feuded.

INSATIABLE WANDERLUST

Via New York, Bird returned to Britain and headed to Edinburgh, where Hennie lived. But her travelling adventures were far from over: in 1878, she journeyed through Asia, visiting Japan, China, Korea, Vietnam, Singapore and Malaya. While Bird did eventually marry – in 1881 in the wake of Hennie's death, to surgeon Dr John Bishop – it did not last long. Her husband died in 1886, leaving her with a comfortable income.

She studied medicine and, in her later years, visited Turkey, Persia, Armenia and Morocco. While in India, she worked with medical missionary Fanny Jane Butler to found the John Bishop Memorial Hospital in Srinagar, in the Kashmir Valley. Then in 1891, Bird gave a speech on the persecution of Christians in Kurdistan in a committee room of the House of Commons.

She was able to do all this due to her fame. As a woman of letters, Bird had brought the wonders and beauties of the wider world to Victorian Britain, making her arguably the greatest of the seven trailblazers that writer and geographer Dorothy Middleton profiled for her book, *Victorian Lady Travellers* (1965). And, in part, it all started with that terrifying, exhilarating voyage in 1873 – the year of so many of her greatest adventures – when Isabella Bird learnt to fly free.

GET HOOKED

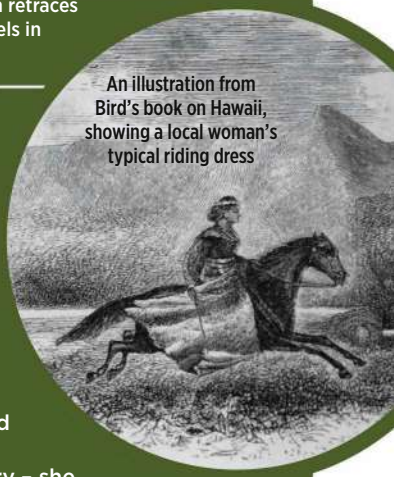
WATCH

BBC TWO

Ruby Wax, Melanie Brown and Emily Atack retrace Bird's US adventures in the three-part series *Trailblazers: A Rocky Mountain Road Trip*, which is due to air on BBC Two and BBC iPlayer in late November

Q&A
Linda Ballou

An adventure-travel writer and an expert on Isabella Bird, Linda appears in the new BBC series *Trailblazers: A Rocky Mountain Road Trip*, which retraces Bird's travels in the US



An illustration from Bird's book on Hawaii, showing a local woman's typical riding dress

Isabella Bird inspired you to become an adventure-travel writer. What is it that draws you to her?
I love her spirit of being willing to take a chance; a risk. She would make serious decisions in five minutes. When she landed in Honolulu – at a really important part of her story – she saw the Hawaiian women galloping around the harbour in flowing dresses and ribbons. It was a kaleidoscope of colour and energy. Bird was so taken by this that she was like, 'Oh, my God, I want to join that cavalcade *right now*'.

And yet she had been thought of as an invalid. How do we explain that?
I think she was a victim of overdosing. She had what they called carbuncles, and it was a tumour. They operated on her without anaesthesia when she was young. A lot of people don't believe her stories and think she was exaggerating, but I believe that, because of her early years, she had developed a real threshold for pain that was way beyond what most of us could endure. They gave her laudanum (an opium extract) and cannabis. They bled her with leeches and incisions, and they encouraged her to drink copious amounts of alcohol.

How important was her time in Hawaii in overcoming this past?
Hawaii was a transformational experience. Bird wouldn't have been able to do what she did in Colorado without the time in the Hawaiian Islands. That was where she became strong. The Hawaiian Islands are nurturing and healing, they're lazy and comfortable. You swim there and you become healthy – and that is exactly what Bird did.

What do you think, to her, was the most important part of her time in Colorado?
The climax for her was to climb Longs Peak. She was drawn to the wilds and to the top of the world to be at the seat of her God. Her God was nature and her spirituality dwelt in nature.

LINDA BALLOU is the author of a novel inspired by the life of Isabella Bird, *Embrace of the Wild* (Wind Dancer Press, 2021). Find out more at *lindaballouauthor.com*

WHAT IF... NAPOLEON HAD DEFEATED RUSSIA?

Professor Michael Broers and **Nige Tassell** consider what would have happened next had the French ruler's ill-fated Russian adventure been successful

In 1812, Napoleon Bonaparte – emperor of the French for the previous eight years – sent 600,000 of his troops into Russia. Allied with the British and Austrian empires, Russia had increasingly become the focus of Napoleon's foreign policy following his naval defeat to the British at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805. The same year, victory over combined Austro-Russian forces at the battle of Austerlitz had seen him extending his influence eastwards through the annexing of lands in Prussia.

Before considering what would have happened next had Napoleon's Russian campaign been successful, it is instructive to first understand his motivation for putting so many of his men on the front line. It would be too easy to assume that Napoleon was simply empire-building and pursuing ambitions of controlling much of mainland Europe. This is not the case, as Michael Broers – professor of western European history at the University of Oxford and author of *Napoleon: The Decline and Fall of an Empire, 1811–1821* (Pegasus Books, 2022) – explains.

"Napoleon never intended to conquer Russia. It's an urban myth. His aim was to find the Russian army – the only one still strong enough to be a threat to him – and thump it. He knew he couldn't rule Russia. His objective was to make it too weak to fight him, and to force Tsar Alexander I to be his ally. Napoleon had no intention of deposing or replacing him, but he wanted to neutralise the Russians for as long as possible, and leave them too weak to worry him. The invasion was about containment."

Indeed, why the notion of Napoleon as the power-hungry expansionist out to conquer Russia has prevailed is a curious one. He himself admitted that Russian containment was the invasion's over-riding objective. "They must be pushed back into their ice," the French emperor reportedly announced, "so that for the next 25 years, they no longer come to busy themselves with the affairs of civilised Europe." By reducing Russia's military potency, Napoleon wouldn't have to keep looking over his shoulder.

Had he been successful in his Russian mission, had he not retreated with just 100,000 survivors of his original 600,000-strong invasion force, what would have been the significance for eastern Europe? "If he had crushed Russia," says Professor Broers, "it would have meant there would no longer have been a threat to his ally in Poland, the Duchy of Warsaw. Above all, it would have brought Russia back into the Continental Blockade against Britain – and so cut off the supplies that the Royal Navy needed for its ships."

DID YOU KNOW?

LONG JOURNEY HOME

In 2019 the skeleton of Charles-Étienne Gudin, a French general killed during Napoleon's 1812 invasion of Russia, was unearthed near the city of Smolensk. The remains were returned to France in 2021 and buried with full military honours.

IN CONTEXT

In the first days of the summer of 1812, French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte sent 600,000 troops of his Grande Armée into Russia. The Russian army chose to protect its soldiers by withdrawing from certain cities, often razing them to the ground and ruining crops in an act of attrition warfare. The French advanced but, with dwindling supplies, Napoleon's men struggled, suffering from hunger as well as diseases such as dysentery. Having lost great numbers in various skirmishes, a protracted time spent in burned-out Moscow convinced the emperor to retreat with a brutal winter on the horizon. He returned to Paris, having lost half a million of his men.

Napoleon (*below*) made significant blunders during his invasion of Russia, including a refusal to deploy his Imperial Guard at the battle of Borodino (*main*)

A BRITISH INVASION?

The Continental Blockade was Napoleon's response to Britain's own blockade of the French coasts, and prohibited the importation of British goods into any countries that were allied to France. A weakened Russia would have been forced to adhere to the doctrine, in the process damaging Britain economically. "The whole aim of the invasion of Russia," confirms Professor Broers, "was, ultimately, to weaken Britain – and the Royal Navy especially. It would have been his first priority."

Indeed, had his troops accomplished their mission and emerged more intact than they were in defeat,

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an invasion of Britain could well have been on the cards. "He never gave up on it. He intended to invade Britain in 1811, but felt Russia had become the bigger threat." That being said, it is likely that an invasion of Britain would have been a dismal failure – even if Napoleon himself didn't see that.

There's also a theory that Britain's other route around the Blockade, Spain, might well have found themselves subject to an amplification of the Peninsular War (which had begun in 1808), but Professor Broers disagrees. "Napoleon's army fought on in Spain until the end – until it was driven out. He wanted 'out' of Spain for years; he saw it like Vietnam. With Russia back in the Blockade, it would not have mattered so much, as Britain would have been less of a threat."

Generally, though, Napoleon was unlikely to have expanded his empire. "He wanted to protect what he had, above all. He would have liked to have regained France's lost colonies in the Caribbean and, had he managed to get full control of Spain, its colonial empire, but it wasn't a priority."

MAIN: **A painting shows Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in October 1812. Tens of thousands of his troops perished over the winter months that followed**

INSET: **French soldiers depicted carrying out inspections in the Kingdom of Saxony (a Napoleonic client state) in a bid to stop people from importing British goods**

"A FRENCH DEFEAT OF RUSSIA IS LIKELY TO HAVE BROUGHT MORE PEACE AND STABILITY TO MAINLAND EUROPE"

NEUTRALISING THE THREAT

Aside from its emperor not subsequently falling from power, a French defeat of Russia is likely to have brought more peace and stability to Europe. "Had Napoleon beaten the Russians," concludes Professor Broers, "there wouldn't have really been much trouble left inside Europe to threaten him. A unified Germany would have been impossible as long as France was strong. Poland would have been united and strong, and never conquered again. And Russia would not have been able to make trouble in the Balkans for a while."

Had he managed to contain Russia and avoid that humiliating defeat, the course of European affairs would surely have taken a different direction.

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NEXT MONTH
What if... Britain had lost the Falklands War?

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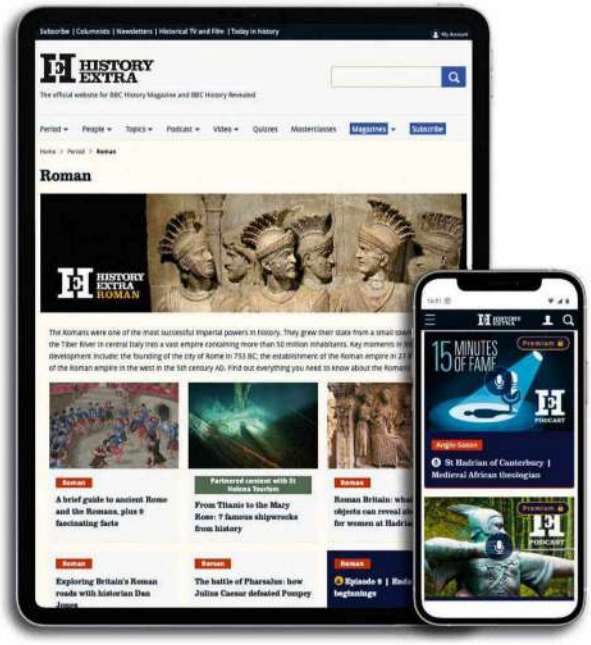

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150
The number of objects discovered within the bandages of Tutankhamun, including amulets, bracelets, decorative collars and two daggers.

TROUBLE IN TEXAS
The battle of the Alamo resulted in the deaths of around 200 Texan troops – but their heroic attempts to defend the garrison inspired countless others to join the fight against Mexican rule

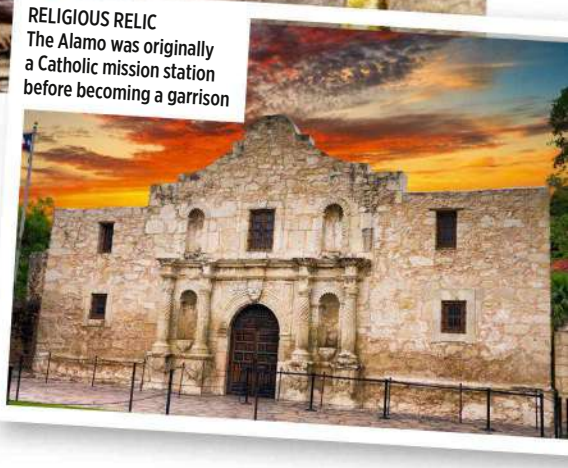
Why should people "remember the Alamo"?

SHORT ANSWER The battle cry helped Texas snatch victory from the jaws of defeat

LONG ANSWER The 13-day defence of the Alamo, a mission station-turned-fort in San Antonio de Bexar, Texas, ended in catastrophe. When Texans revolted against Mexican rule a few months earlier, the response of General Antonio Lopes de Santa Anna – the self-proclaimed 'Napoleon of the West' – was to lead a punitive force to retake the land.

From 23 February to 6 March 1836, thousands of Mexican troops besieged the garrison holed up at the Alamo, a ragtag bunch of some 200 Texans led by Colonel William B Travis and James Bowie who managed to repel wave after wave of assaults. But the pressure finally told: the Mexicans broke through, captured the Alamo, and left few defenders alive. Not long afterwards, Santa Anna ordered the massacre of prisoners from another battle, at Goliad.

Although a crushing defeat, the Alamo immediately passed into legend for the courage and sacrifice of its defenders and inspired men to come forward in huge numbers to fight. It shifted the course of the revolution. When the Texans achieved a decisive victory at the battle of San Jacinto just six weeks later, they were crying out as they chased down the retreating enemy: "Remember the Alamo!"



RELIGIOUS RELIC
The Alamo was originally a Catholic mission station before becoming a garrison

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STARS IN THEIR EYES
Thomas P Stafford (*left*) and Wally Schirra (*right*) engaged in some musical mischief in space – much to the amusement of those on Earth

What was the first music to be performed in space?

SHORT ANSWER Oh, what fun it is to ride... in a two-man space capsule

LONG ANSWER In December 1965, the Gemini 6A mission achieved two important firsts in spaceflight. Having just completed the first-ever crewed rendezvous with another craft (Gemini 7), US astronauts Wally Schirra and Thomas P Stafford gave a surprise performance of 'Jingle Bells' using a harmonica and a set of bells the duo had smuggled aboard before launch.

Not only did the performance mark the first use of musical instruments in space, but it was also a decent prank too, coming immediately after a radio communication in which the men claimed to have spotted a "satellite" resembling Santa's sleigh.

However, the first person to sing in space was the cosmonaut Pavel Popovich, who belted out the song '14 Minutes Until Start' (the unofficial anthem of the Soviet Union's space programme) during the Vostok 4 mission in 1962.

3
The number of future national leaders present at the battle of Spion Kop in 1900: future prime ministers Winston Churchill and Louis Botha, and Indian independence figure Mohandas Gandhi.

What does Japan's imperial regalia look like?

SHORT ANSWER That can only be guessed, since no one is allowed to see them

LONG ANSWER The Three Sacred Treasures that make up the imperial regalia of Japan have always been completely out of view (so don't expect any nice photographs here) and their location is unknown. They only appear at an emperor's enthronement ceremony – and even then, they remain in boxes. No one can look upon them. No one, the emperor included. What they look like simply cannot be confirmed.

What *is* known is that there is the sword Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi (which represents valour); the mirror Yata no Kagami (wisdom); and a kidney shaped jewel, Yasakani no Magatama (benevolence). Together, they signify an emperor's authority.

According to legend, the treasures were brought to Earth by the deity Ninigi and passed to the mythological first emperor, Jimmu, in the seventh century BC.

NOTHING TO SEE HERE
Japan's reigning emperor, Naruhito (*left*), at his 2019 enthronement ceremony. Even he cannot look at the Three Sacred Treasures

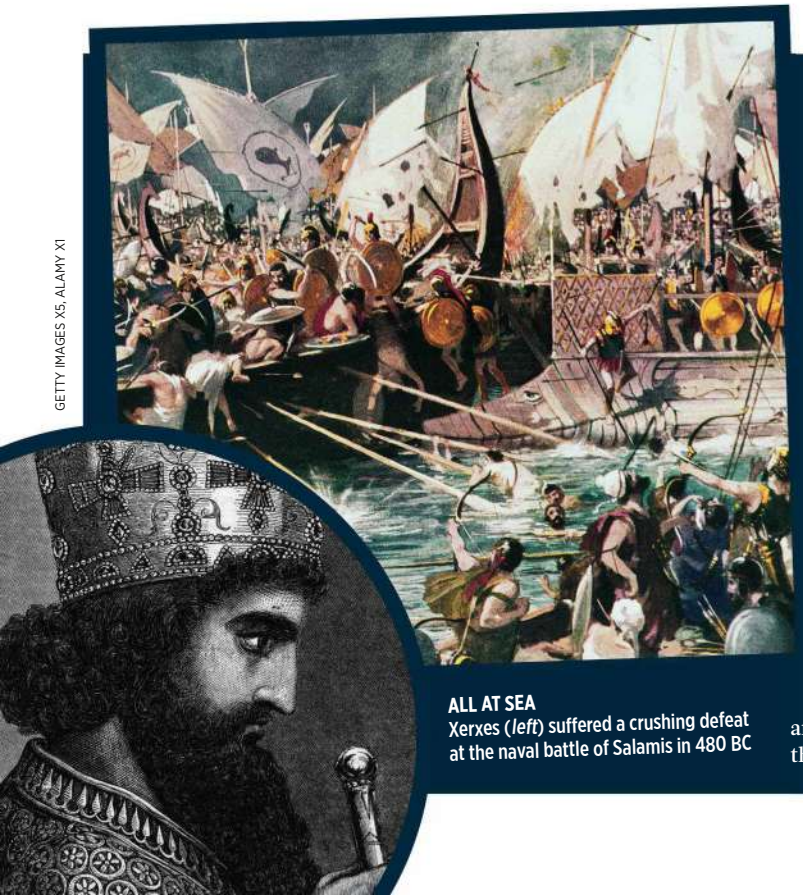
Why did Xerxes invade Greece?

SHORT ANSWER Sure, the Persian king wanted to make his empire greater. He also wanted to make daddy proud

LONG ANSWER It is possible that Xerxes, king of kings of the Achaemenid empire, is best known for bringing a colossal army to Greece and almost getting stomped on by 300 Spartans. Let's remember, though: that reputation came from Greek sources understandably disinclined to make him look good.

As his father was Darius I and mother was daughter of Cyrus the Great (founder of their dynasty), it is accurate to say he came to the Persian throne, in 486 BC, with a ruthless need to prove himself. He put down revolts in Babylon and Egypt, before turning his attentions to finishing his father's work. Darius had died preparing for his own campaign in Greece, having already been beaten there at the battle of Marathon.

In the end, Xerxes was beaten too thanks to Greek victories at Salamis and Plataea. He spent the rest of his reign in Persia, before being murdered by his advisor in 465 BC.



ALL AT SEA
Xerxes (*left*) suffered a crushing defeat at the naval battle of Salamis in 480 BC

GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X1

THE NORSEMEN COMETH
The AD 793 raid on Lindisfarne may have seen horrific bloodshed, but it wasn't the first time that the Vikings had attacked the British Isles

Was Lindisfarne the first Viking attack on Britain?

SHORT ANSWER No, but the raid on a centre of Christianity was a shocking announcement that the Vikings were coming

LONG ANSWER "The woeful inroads of heathen men destroyed God's church in Lindisfarne island by fierce robbery and slaughter," was how the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* recorded the famous Norse raid on the Northumbrian monastery of Lindisfarne in AD 793. Alcuin of York's account was more graphic: "The pagans have contaminated the sanctuaries of God, and have poured out the blood of the saints round about the altar... [they] have trampled upon the bodies of the saints in the temple of God like dung in the street."

The raid on Lindisfarne has long marked the beginning of Britain's Viking Age, and in terms of how shocking, how sensational, the news of the monastery's desecration was – not only on the British Isles, but across Christian Europe – it is well merited. But it was not the first Viking attack.

There were earlier mentions of "pagan seamen" off the Kent coast, and in AD 787 (some accounts say AD 789) three ships of Norse invaders landed at Portland, in what is now Dorset, and killed the local reeve. This could truly be claimed as the start of the Viking Age. And with attacks in the Hebrides and Rathlin, Ireland, within a couple of years of Lindisfarne, the Vikings quickly made their presence felt.

DID YOU KNOW?

WHAT A RAG

In 1831, the London writer Henry Berthold published 10 issues of a newspaper entitled *Berthold's Political Handkerchief*, printed on plain calico so that he could avoid paying the stamp duty on paper.

TALL ORDER

The first live giraffe seen in France arrived in 1826, having travelled by ship to Marseilles. The animal – a gift from the Ottoman viceroy of Egypt – spent the voyage in the hold, but a hole had to be cut in the deck for it to poke its head through.

MEN AT ARMS

When knights Richard Grosvenor and Richard Scrope joined England's invasion of Scotland in 1385, they realised they had the same coat of arms. A lawsuit ensued, and resulted in Grosvenor changing his family shield.

FULL OF BEANS

Senate bean soup has been served at the US Senate dining room every day for more than a century, bar one. On 14 September 1943, World War II rationing meant there weren't quite enough beans. A quick restock was made for the next day.

When did the Dismount Parade begin?

SHORT ANSWER Victoria was so unamused that she taught her guards a long-lasting lesson

LETTING YOUR GUARDS DOWN
The daily ceremony sees the mounted guards replaced by dismounted sentries

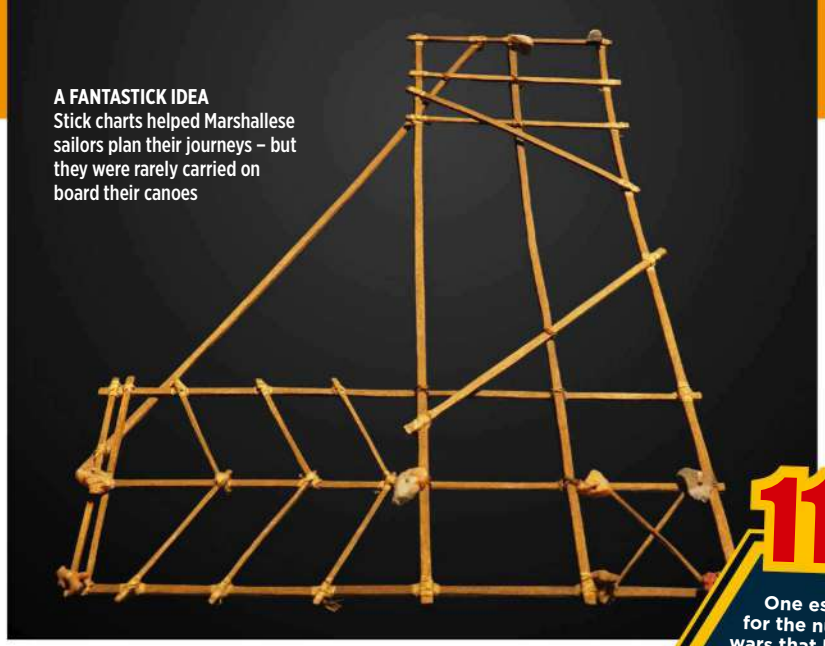
LONG ANSWER At 4pm every day, the members of the Household Cavalry guarding the official entrance to Buckingham Palace parade for inspection by an officer before they can be relieved of duty. It is known by several names: the Dismount Parade, the 4 O'Clock Parade, and the Punishment Parade.

That last one alludes to its origins. In 1894, when Queen Victoria showed up unexpectedly at Horse Guards, she found men drinking and gambling on duty (insert joke about her being not amused). Victoria ordered a daily inspection to keep the guards in line from then on, and to make her point clear she demanded the parade take place for the next 100 years. By 1994 the tradition had stuck, so the parade just kept on going.

What was an onocentaur?

SHORT ANSWER It was like a centaur, but with added 'oh no'

LONG ANSWER The centaur is well known: a creature of Greek mythology with the upper half of a human attached to the body and legs of a horse, depicted in classical art and in countless books, films and television shows. But what about the onocentaur? The idea is the same. There's the head, arms and torso of a human, but instead of having the bottom half of a noble and majestic horse, it's a donkey. Also, it's often only the back legs. This ass-centaur appeared in medieval compendiums known as bestiaries, which were packed with a variety of weird and wonderful creatures, such as the poison-poo-firing bonnacon.



A FANTASTICK IDEA
Stick charts helped Marshallese sailors plan their journeys – but they were rarely carried on board their canoes

115

One estimate for the number of wars that have been fought over Belgrade due to its strategic position. The city has been razed to the ground 44 times.

How did Marshall Islands stick charts work?

SHORT ANSWER Surrounded by ocean, Pacific islanders had no choice but to become expert navigators

LONG ANSWER For centuries, the peoples of the Marshall Islands accomplished extraordinary feats of navigation across the Pacific Ocean in canoes, helped by charts made from coconut fronds and palm strips tied together, with cowrie shells attached. Each of these stick charts was unique – and only truly knowable to its creator – but generally, the straight and curved lines of the sticks showed the location of ocean swells or currents, while the shells represented different land masses.

There were three main types: *meddo* (the closest to a literal map); *mattang* (abstract interpretations of ocean patterns used for training); and *rebbelib* (which had more detailed records of the Pacific islands). They bewildered European sailors when they came across them in the late 19th century. But what makes the whole thing more remarkable was that the Marshallese didn't actually take their stick charts on voyages, instead studying them on dry land. It was up to them to use their own skill to utilise the sophisticated information correctly.

What was a Beaker burial?

SHORT ANSWER When the bell tolled for certain people in the Bronze Age, they took their bell beaker with them

LONG ANSWER During the early Bronze Age, a distinctive phenomenon started sprouting up in Europe known as the Beaker (or Bell-Beaker) culture, so named for its pottery. The Beaker peoples, who made their way to Britain around 4,500 years ago, especially enjoyed creating bell-shaped beakers, or vessels, decorated with stamped geometric patterns, and were also keen on new technology, like metallurgy of copper and gold.

When a person died, they were buried in a single grave, usually in a crouched position alongside one of their beakers. Hundreds of such burials have been unearthed, including the body of a man near Stonehenge who has been dubbed the Amesbury Archer, and a woman aged between 30 and 40 found near Cirencester, Gloucestershire. She is now on display at the town's Corinium Museum.

BURIED (WITH) TREASURE
A recreation of a Beaker burial at the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid – complete with bell-shaped grave goods

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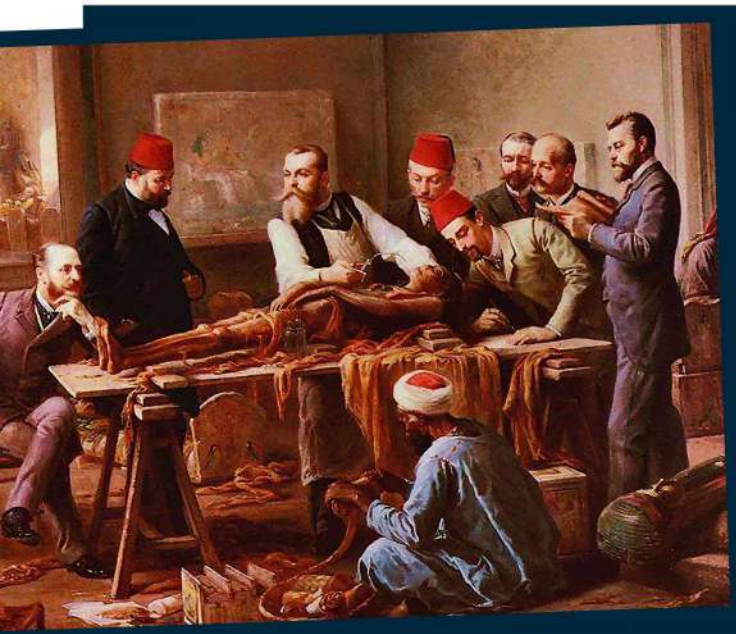


THAT'S A WRAP
A painting by Paul Philippoteaux shows a group of men eagerly examining a mummy – a macabre pastime that made its way into European homes

Did Victorians hold parties to unwrap Egyptian mummies?

SHORT ANSWER All things Egypt became must-have souvenirs, and wealthy Europeans couldn't wait to unwrap their 'presents'

LONG ANSWER A result of Napoleon's Egypt campaign, which began in 1798, was a period of intense Egyptomania in Europe and a surge in souvenir-hunting, with wealthy men and women eager to get their hands on trinkets, monumental statues and even the occupants of tombs. The latter, in particular, helped inspire one pastime that enthralled 19th-century society: unwrapping the mummified remains of ancient Egyptians at parties.

Occasionally, these events purported to have some scientific intention – English antiquarian Thomas Pettigrew popularised them by hosting a sold-out unwrapping at the Royal College of Surgeons in 1834 – but, in truth, the appeal was the macabre entertainment. Besides, there were other forms of less-than respectful treatment of Egyptian remains, including grinding them up to make medicines or a paint pigment known as 'mummy brown'. And, after an unwrapping, the exposed mummy could be sold off to be used as fertiliser.

ROUGH JUSTICE
A 15th-century judicial duel. Advocates of the practice believed that God would let the innocent win and the guilty die

When did we stop using trial by combat?

SHORT ANSWER Until the 16th century, a trusted method of interpreting God's judgment was a fight to the death

LONG ANSWER The 1386 duel between Frenchmen Jean de Carrouges and Jacques le Gris has been referred to as "the last duel". Indeed, that was good enough for the title of Ridley Scott's 2021 historical epic, starring Matt Damon and Adam Driver as the two men fighting to determine the truth of the charge levelled at Le Gris of raping Carrouges's wife, Marguerite.

Judicial duels like this – where the verdict was put to God, who passed judgment by letting the innocent win and the guilty die – were prevalent in medieval Europe, with the earliest-known evidence coming from a Burgundian decree in AD 502.

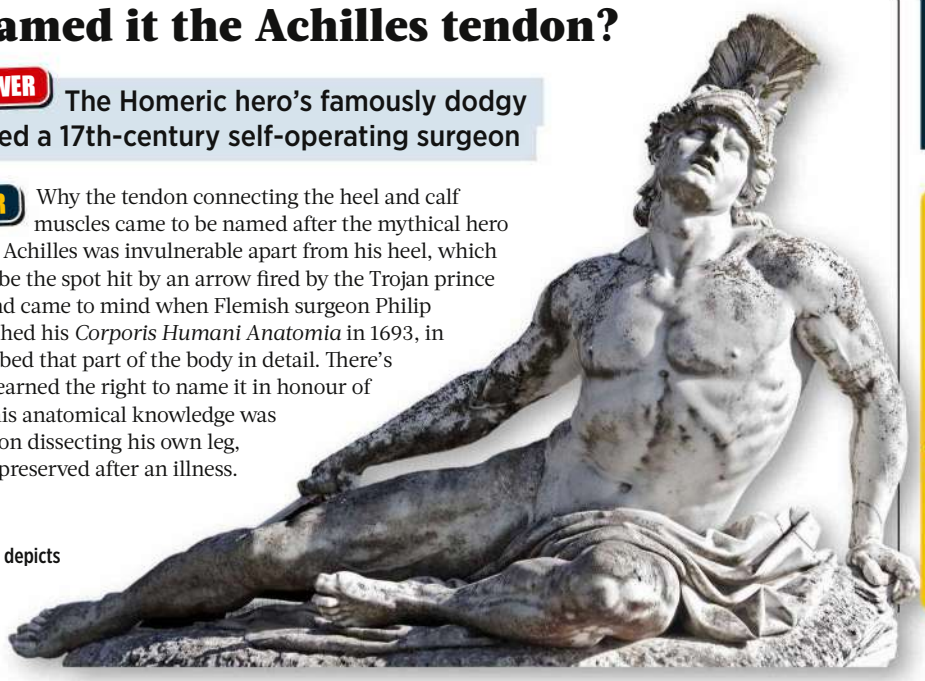
The practice did not end in 1386, however. France passed a ban in 1409, but as duels permitted by the *parlement* of Paris were exempt, legal and lethal trials by combat continued in the capital well into the 16th century. Elsewhere, the last one in Ireland took place in 1583, and in 1597 in Scotland.

Of course, duelling did not die out (pistols at dawn, 10 paces, standing politely while being shot at, and all that) – they just weren't judicially sanctioned. Duels became about individual honour and reputation. Incidentally, the last one of those, fought with swords, ended up being between two Frenchmen again. In 1967.

Who named it the Achilles tendon?

SHORT ANSWER The Homeric hero's famously dodgy heel inspired a 17th-century self-operating surgeon

LONG ANSWER Why the tendon connecting the heel and calf muscles came to be named after the mythical hero is clear enough. Achilles was invulnerable apart from his heel, which so happened to be the spot hit by an arrow fired by the Trojan prince Paris. That legend came to mind when Flemish surgeon Philip Verheyen published his *Corporis Humani Anatomia* in 1693, in which he described that part of the body in detail. There's no question he earned the right to name it in honour of Achilles, since his anatomical knowledge was allegedly based on dissecting his own leg, amputated and preserved after an illness.



DOWN AT HEEL
A statue of Achilles depicts the warrior laying wounded – arrow still in situ

What was Hitler's 'Nero Decree'?

SHORT ANSWER A scorched-earth policy forged in desperation

LONG ANSWER On 19 March 1945, with defeat in World War II only a matter of time, Adolf Hitler issued a desperate and deluded order. For good reason it became known as the 'Nero Decree' after the cruel emperor who, in an apocryphal story, fiddled while Rome burned. It called for the destruction of infrastructure and industry in Nazi Germany to stop the Allies making use of them as they advanced.

The man responsible for enacting the order was armaments minister Albert Speer, but he was appalled at such a scorched-earth policy and disobeyed it, arguing that Germans would need all the resources they could get after the war.

When he put this in a letter, Hitler replied that it wasn't "necessary" to worry about the German people. "For the nation has proved to be the weaker... in any case only those who are inferior will remain after this struggle, for the good have already been killed."

ARCHITECT OF EVIL
Albert Speer, seen here with Hitler, had been responsible for designing buildings before becoming armaments minister

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ONE TO WATCH

MAIN: **Professor Hannah Fry's new BBC Two series explores the historical origins of inventions that seem thoroughly modern**

BELOW: **One episode reveals how food delivery apps, like Deliveroo, use technology first developed for nuclear missiles**

Invention and happenstance

The Secret Genius of Modern Life

BBC Two and BBC iPlayer, streaming now

We are surrounded by technology that, because it has become so familiar, we take for granted. Yet much of this technology would, just a few years ago, have been the stuff of science fiction. Steve Jobs, remember, didn't announce the launch of the first iPhone until January 2007, yet by 2018 Apple had sold two billion phones.

Hannah Fry, whose day job is as professor in the mathematics of cities at the UCL Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, certainly doesn't take technology for granted. Just the reverse, she wants to know how the increasingly digitally driven world we move through came to be.

"The technology that surrounds us undeniably shapes our lives, but how much do we really know about where it comes from, or how it works, and where it's all going?" she said when her new six-part series was first announced. "Things like delivery apps, bank cards, trainers, took real innovation and ingenuity to create."

In part, this is a series about today's researchers as Fry heads for – and forgive the corporate speak – innovation hubs such as Visa's European data centre and Deliveroo's design lab. The latter, we learn, is a spot where immensely clever people work on technology that predicts what you're going to order before you're even hungry.

But there's a strong historical strand to the series, too. Technology often reaches us in surprising ways, with ideas from one sector adopted by researchers working in completely different areas. Delivery apps, Fry discovers, are built upon technology developed for nuclear missiles, while X-rated websites drove a revolution in online payments.

The series kicked off on Thursday 10 November with an episode about the bank card, and is among those available to view via BBC iPlayer. Anyone happily using contactless payments, it turns out, has Russia's spies to thank, while both the CIA and a 1950s homemaker had roles in kickstarting the bank card revolution.

WEEKLY TV & RADIO
Visit *historyextra.com* for updates on upcoming TV and radio programmes

BBC/MARCO CERVI X1, GETTY IMAGES X1

Dr Lucy Worsley's latest series sees her take a trip on board the SS *Sudan* – the vessel that inspired the plot of *Death on the Nile*

Professor David Olusoga charts the fascinating 400-year history of London's Covent Garden in a one-off documentary for BBC Two

Life in the city

The People's Piazza: A History of Covent Garden

BBC Two and BBC iPlayer, streaming now

Every year, around 43 million people visit Covent Garden. As presenter Professor David Olusoga notes in this feature-length documentary, "They come for the shops and the theatres, for the street performers and the restaurants, but they also come because Covent Garden today is what it has been at various moments in its history: it's a place to come and feel part of London."

Covent Garden's famous Piazza, located on the eastern edge of the West End, he adds, is "like the frame of a painting". Inside it, "generation after generation have lived out their lives."

Proving this point is a programme that reaches back 400 years. The central square was laid out in the 1630s, when Francis Russell, 4th Earl of Bedford (1587–1641), commissioned the architect Inigo Jones (1573–1652) to come up with designs for a space that was immediately hugely fashionable.

It hasn't always been thus. Over the years, the fortunes of Covent Garden have ebbed and flowed. It has also been a locale associated with taverns and brothels. Market traders have been important to its history, too, in particular those selling fruit and vegetables, who once worked out of the grand neoclassical building that forms the heart of Covent Garden today.

Despite this rich history, there was a real threat to the area when, in great part because of traffic congestion, the market was relocated to New Covent Garden Market and the space was earmarked for redevelopment. Much might have been lost but for campaigners such as architect Jim Monahan, interviewed here, who in 1971 helped to set up the Covent Garden Community Association.

A view of one of Covent Garden's arcades, designed by the pioneering architect Inigo Jones (1573–1652)

The secret modernist

Agatha Christie: Mystery Queen / BBC Two, late November/early December

For all that her fiction deals with murder most horrid, many of us turn to Agatha Christie (1890–1976) when we need the escapism of a *cosy* murder mystery. Photographs from the author's later life seem to tally with this idea, showing her as a stolid and even matronly figure.

But the real Agatha Christie, suggests Dr Lucy Worsley in a new three-part series, was far more interesting. Christie, she reminds us, lived through tumultuous decades, years that encompassed two global conflicts and seismic changes in attitudes towards class and race.

In Worsley's reading, also set out in her recent Christie biography, *Agatha Christie: A Very Elusive Woman*, the crime queen's own thoughts on these upheavals are to be found in her novels – books far more influenced by 20th-century modernism than we may imagine.

A Spy Among Friends stars Damian Lewis (*left*) as MI6 intelligence officer Nicholas Elliott and Guy Pearce (*right*) as Soviet double agent Kim Philby

Words that endure

The BBC Radio 4 Reith Lectures / BBC Radio 4, Wednesday 30 November

Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is one of four public figures to deliver a Reith Lecture this year

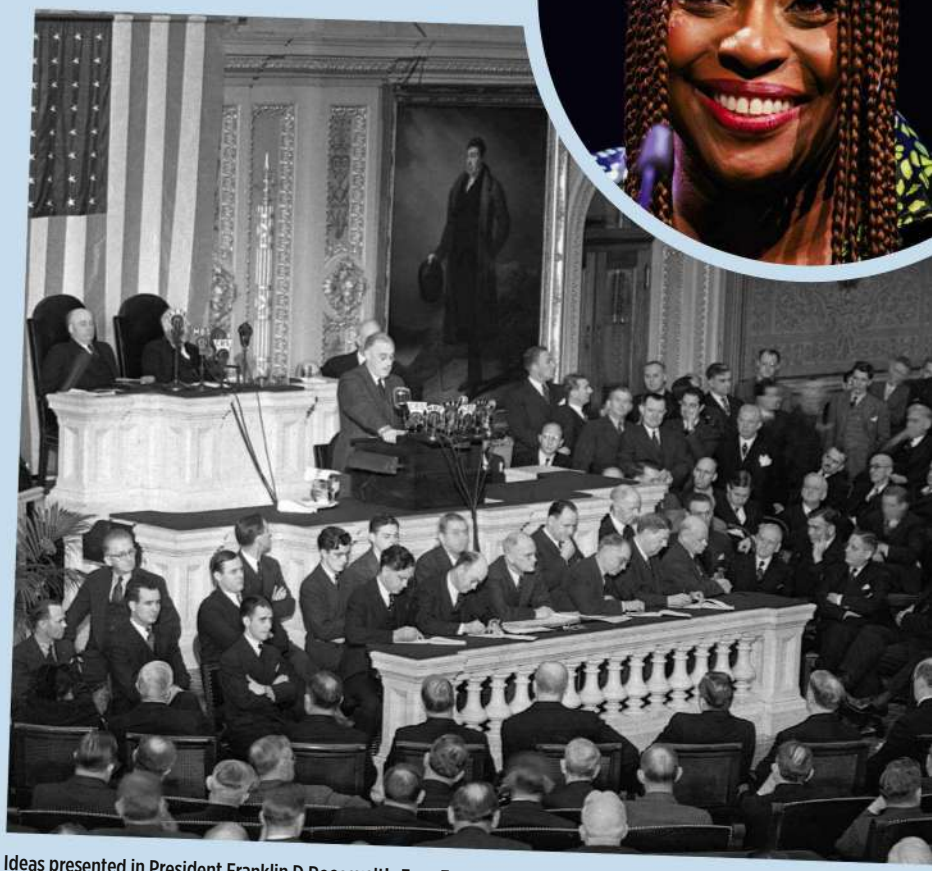
The State of the Union address given by President Franklin D Roosevelt on 6 January 1941 has passed into history as the Four Freedoms speech. Delivered in front of Congress 11 months before the US entered World War II following the attack on Pearl Harbor, it was largely concerned with national security and, as Roosevelt challenged the idea of US non-interventionism, the threat that the burgeoning conflict posed to democracy around the globe.

Yet that's not primarily why the speech is remembered. Rather, it's recalled because Roosevelt proposed a quartet of freedoms that should be enjoyed "everywhere in the world": freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

More than 80 years later, what might we learn from revisiting Roosevelt's words? It's a question that underpins this year's Reith Lectures, a series of talks inaugurated in 1948 to mark the contribution of the BBC's first director-general, John Reith.

Unusually, there are four different speakers this year. In lectures recorded in October and November, novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie discusses freedom of speech; theologian Lord Rowan Williams explores freedom of worship; activist, writer and musician Darren McGarvey, aka Loki, looks at freedom from want; and foreign affairs expert and former presidential advisor Dr Fiona Hill talks about freedom from fear.

In each case Roosevelt's words offer a starting point for the speakers to look at today's world. McGarvey, for example, who won the 2018 Orwell Prize for *Poverty Safari: Understanding the Anger of Britain's Underclass* is interested in inequality and poverty, and the ideas of personal responsibility and system change. The lectures are chaired by Anita Anand.



Ideas presented in President Franklin D Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech will underpin the lecture series

The bitterest betrayal

A Spy Among Friends

ITVX, streaming from December

In January 1963, Kim Philby (1912–88) fled Beirut, where he had been working as a journalist and as a spy for MI6, for the USSR. It was a journey that marked the end of his life as a double agent who was secretly working for the KGB, a member of the notorious Cambridge spy ring, and someone who for years leaked sensitive information to the Soviets.

Among those for whom this was the bitterest of personal betrayals was Nicholas Elliott (1916–94). A quintessential establishment figure driven by a sense of duty, Elliott was a close friend of Philby, and personally volunteered to confront his colleague.

Based on Ben Macintyre's book, *A Spy Among Friends: Philby and The Great Betrayal*, this new six-part drama, initially available via the new streaming service ITVX, explores what might have passed between the two men. Guy Pearce leads the cast as Philby, while Damian Lewis plays Elliott. The cast also includes Anna Maxwell Martin, Stephen Kunken and Adrian Edmondson.

It will be particularly intriguing to see how the series tackles Macintyre's suggestion that Philby was allowed to escape to Moscow, a way to avoid an embarrassing public trial.

Damian Lewis, seen here in character as Nicholas Elliott, previously played a spy in an adaptation of John le Carré's novel *Our Kind of Traitor*

Magical tale

The Snowman: The Film That Changed Christmas / Channel 4, date TBC

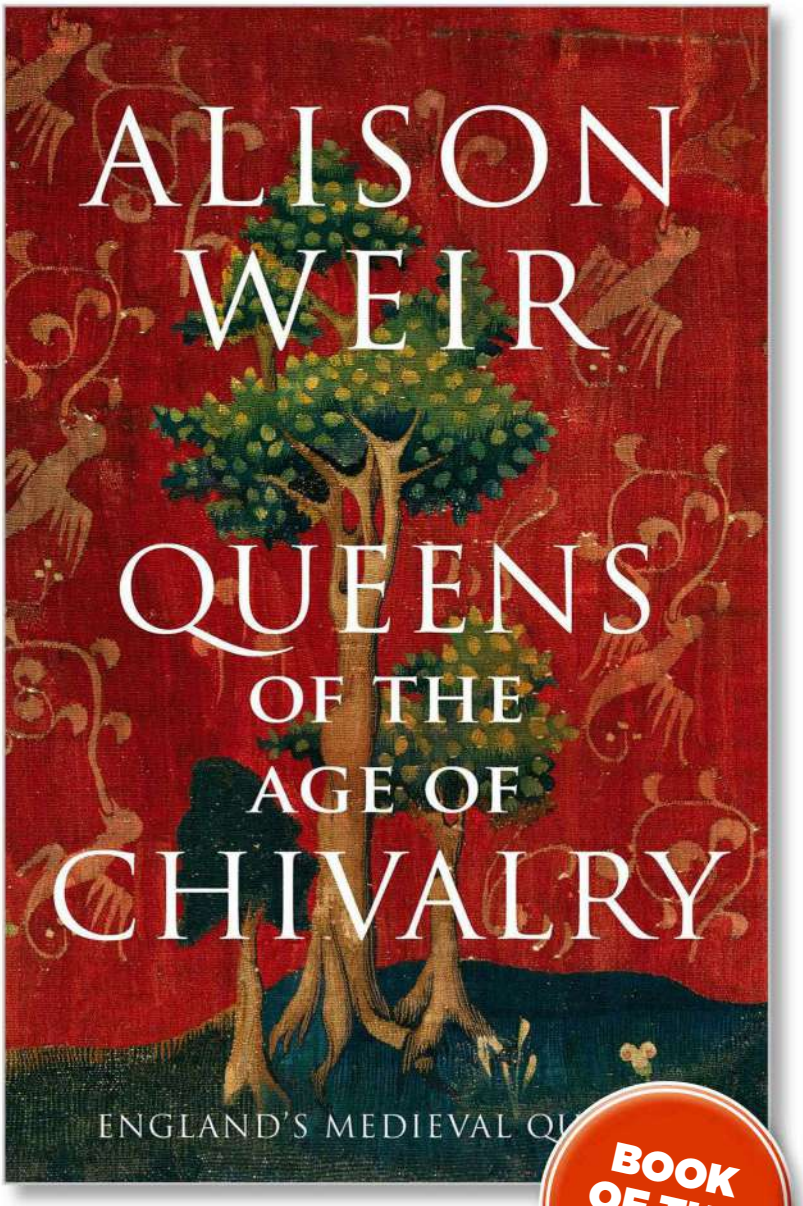
On Boxing Day 1982, Channel 4 first broadcast a 26-minute animated feature, *The Snowman*. Based on Raymond Briggs's children's book about a young boy's adventures with a snowman who has come to life, it has become one of the nation's best-loved Christmas shows.

How did this happen? Why did the film so connect with the British public? Forty years on, here's a documentary that traces the story of *The Snowman*. Expect Howard Blake's evocative music, built around the song 'Walking in the Air', to feature heavily.

BBC/CHRIS DURLACHER X1, BBC/LORIAN REED-DRAKE X1, ITVX X2, GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X1

BOOKS & PODCASTS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS



Queens of the Age of Chivalry: England's Medieval Queens

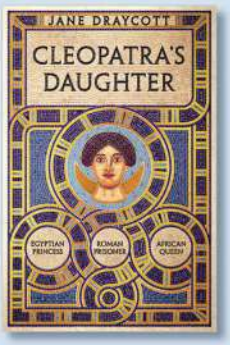
By Alison Weir
Jonathan Cape, £25, hardback, 496 pages

Alison Weir is one of history's biggest names, and reliably offers intimate, insightful portraits of some of the past's most fascinating characters. Here she applies that lens to five queen consorts of the Plantagenet period: Marguerite of France, Isabella of France, Philippa of Hainault, Anne of Bohemia and Isabella of Valois. This was an era of chivalric idealism and political upheaval, social change and military misadventure – and through it all, these women emerge as determined individuals increasingly able to shape the world around them.

Cleopatra's Daughter: Egyptian Princess, Roman Prisoner, African Queen

By Jane Draycott
Apollo, £27.99, hardback, 352 pages

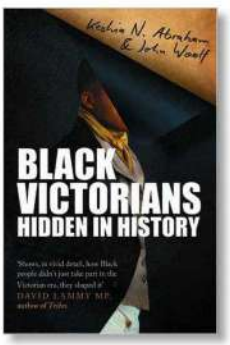
You'd be forgiven for not having heard of Cleopatra Selene, or for confusing her with her more famous namesake – her mother, Cleopatra VII, who co-ruled ancient Egypt for three decades. This biography shifts the spotlight to reveal a fascinating woman whose trajectory, from princess to prisoner to queen of Mauretania on the fringes of the Roman empire, also tells us a great deal about the complex relationship between Egypt and Rome in the period.



Black Victorians: Hidden in History

By Keshia N Abraham and John Woolf
Duckworth, £20, hardback, 364 pages

What were the experiences of black people in Victorian Britain, and why have they been overlooked? Those are the questions at the heart of this book, which profiles a select cast of abolitionists, activists and artists – as well as other, less well-known individuals. It also positions these case studies within their wider political, social and economic context, stressing the need to see them not as remarkable one-offs but instead as examples of the ways in which black lives were woven into the era's wider story.



Conquer We Must: A Military History of Britain, 1914–1945

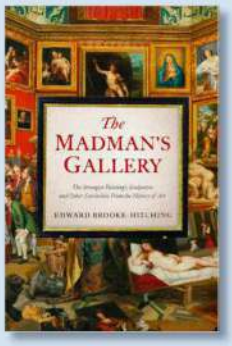
By Robin Prior
Yale, £30, hardback, 832 pages

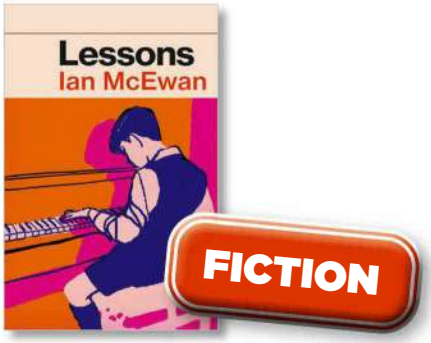
As the introduction to this ambitious history of Britain's role in the two world wars points out, although these twin conflicts have become totemic, century-defining events, their outcome was never a foregone conclusion. The resolve to succeed despite the odds is a repeated theme of Robin Prior's account – which also foregrounds the reality of the fighting on land, at sea and in the air. And, by analysing both World War I and World War II, Prior offers fascinating comparisons between the conflicts.

The Madman's Gallery: The Strangest Paintings, Sculptures and Other Curiosities From the History of Art

By Edward Brooke-Hitching
Simon & Schuster, £30, hardback, 256 pages

Following on from books highlighting eccentric offerings from the fields of literature and cartography, Edward Brooke-Hitching sets off in search of similarly outré gems from visual art. It's as diverse as you'd hope, delving into the 16th-century craze for unicorns, a Japanese fascination with decomposition, and the seemingly unending desire to depict the fusion of man and beast. These examples are balanced by analysis of the trends that led to such creations.





Lessons

By Ian McEwan
Jonathan Cape, £20, hardback, 496 pages

Bestselling author Ian McEwan has used historical tumult for the backdrop of his novels before, including 1992's postwar *Black Dogs* and 2001's decade-hopping *Atonement*. His latest book sets the personal journey of its central character, Roland, against the political upheaval of the second half of the 20th century onwards, from the Cuban Missile Crisis and the 1986 Chernobyl disaster to the ecological and medical crises of more recent years. It's a tale of dislocation and dissatisfaction, but also of warmth and humour.

PODCAST WHAT TO LISTEN TO...

Each month we bring you three of our favourite podcast episodes from the BBC and HistoryExtra

The Rest is History: Trafalgar – A World at War

bbc.in/3f3N2ly

One of *The Rest is History*'s great strengths is its ability to focus on a particular topic or moment in time. That's the case with this deep-dive into the battle of Trafalgar, which sees Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook examine the finer details of Britain's famous naval clash with France and Spain. Was it really the key battle of the 19th century?

Everything You Wanted to Know: the Bank of England

bit.ly/BankPod115

The Bank of England, it's fair to say, has been in the headlines rather more than usual recently. This timely instalment in *HistoryExtra*'s 'Everything You Wanted to Know' series charts the institution's 300-year history, as Professor Anne Murphy chronicles its role from the Industrial Revolution to the Great Depression and beyond.

The Mary Rose: Secrets of a Tudor Warship

bit.ly/MaryRosePod115

Forty years on from the raising of famed Tudor warship the *Mary Rose*, this new *HistoryExtra* podcast series investigates the era in which it sailed, the reasons that it sank, and the story of its salvage. Blending expert insight with contemporary accounts, it's a vivid retelling of one of the most remarkable episodes in Britain's maritime history.

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TEST YOURSELF WITH OUR HISTORICAL PUZZLE EVERY ISSUE

CROSSWORD No. 115

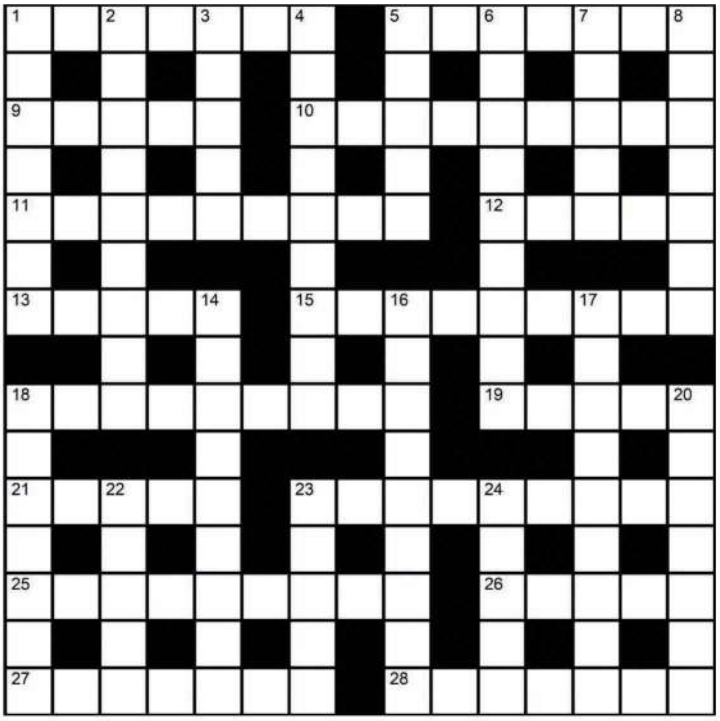
Test your history knowledge to solve our prize puzzle – and you could win a fantastic new book

ACROSS

1 Capital of ancient Egypt (7)
5 Claude ___ (1862–1918), French composer (7)
9 Detection system developed in the mid-20th century (5)
10 HP ___ (1890–1937), US horror writer (9)
11 City formerly known as Stalingrad (9)
12 Horatio ___ (1832–99), US author known for his rags-to-riches stories (5)
13 Nancy ___ (1879–1964), US-born aristocrat and MP (5)
15 Kansas frontier town (5,4)
18 Historic market town in Nottinghamshire (9)
19 Royal official in medieval Scotland (5)
21 Prefix relating to computers or the internet, as in the Cybertron of the early 1960s (5)
23 Long-range artillery weapon (9)
25 Legendary ruler of Macedonia, known as 'the Great' (9)
26 Clan; sect (5)
27 SS ___, Atlantic ocean liner, later a merchant navy troop ship (7)
28 Nasser ___ (b1968), England cricket captain, 1999–2003 (7)

DOWN

1 Historical region in the east of the Czech Republic (7)
2 Leeds suburb known historically for its mine railway (9)
3 Marx brother (1888–1964) (5)
4 Harry Gordon ___ (1858–1947), US-born retail magnate (9)



Set by Richard Smyth

5 Biblical king of Israel and Judah (5)
6 Capital of Romania since 1862 (9)
7 Rhyming ___, East End argot that originated in the early 19th century (5)
8 Swedish town known as a source of scarce chemical elements (7)
14 1832 electoral legislation (6,3)
16 1929 novel by Sinclair Lewis (9)
17 *Once Upon a Time* ___, 1984 crime film (2,7)
18 Archangel (7)
20 Brian ___ (1934–67), Beatles manager (7)
22 Historic city on the Belarus-Poland border (5)
23 Many-headed monster, in Greek myth (5)
24 Roman emperor from AD 79 to AD 81 (5)

CHANCE TO WIN

The BBC Puzzle Book
by Ian Smith and Gareth Moore

HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **BBC History Revealed, Christmas 2022 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA** or email them to **christmas2022@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **15 January 2023.**

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SOLUTION Nº 113

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The competition is open to all UK residents (inc. Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Co London Ltd employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering, participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry per person.

The closing date and time is as shown under **How to Enter**, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of ***BBC History Revealed***) will only ever use personal details for the purposes of administering this competition, and will not publish them or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy. The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company London Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 28 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company London Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up.
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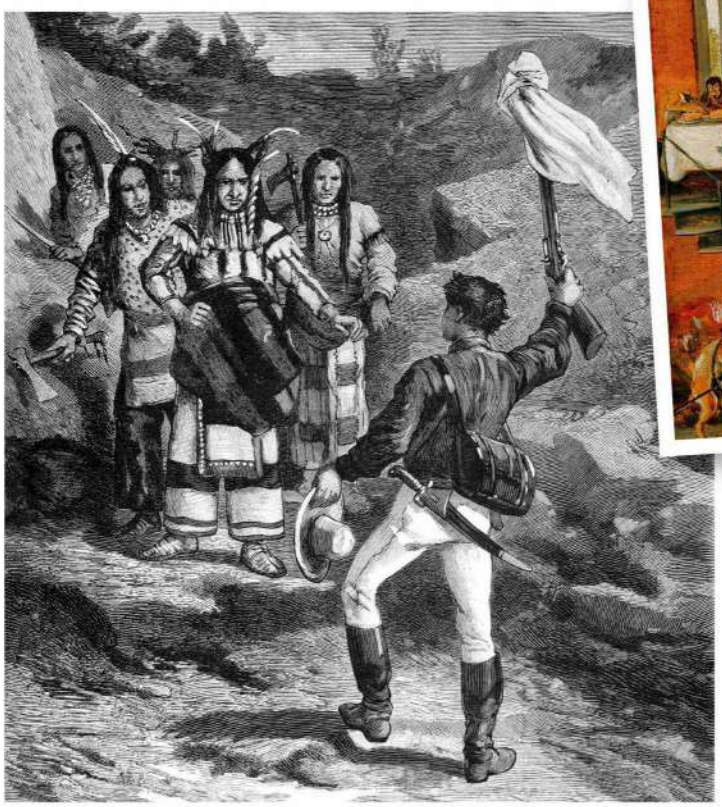
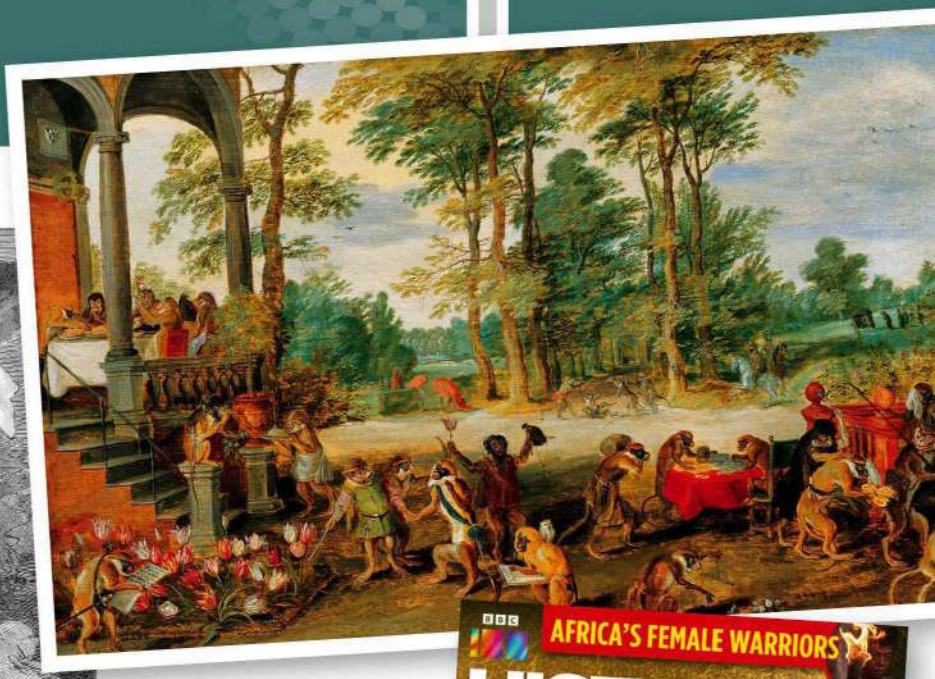
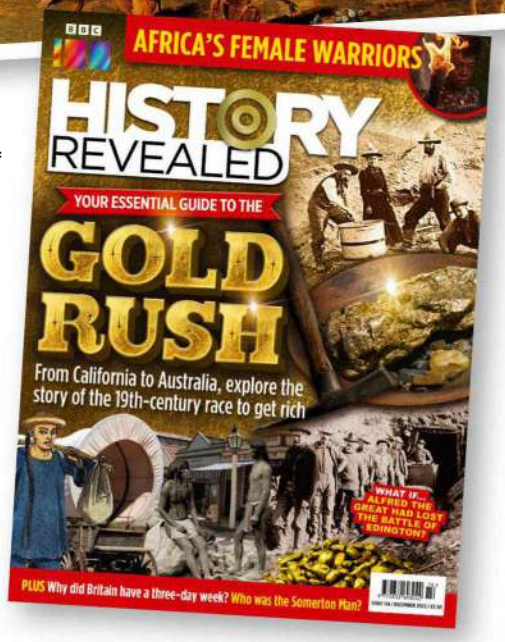
LETTERS





ABOVE: **Reader Ian McDonald draws parallels between the gold rushes of the 19th century and the tulip mania of the 17th century – satirised here in a print dated c1640**

LEFT: **Meanwhile, Dr Stephen Tuffnell – who worked on our December 2022 issue (*right*) – says the rushes were driven by white settler colonialism**


BBC
AFRICA'S FEMALE WARRIORS
HISTORY REVEALED
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE
GOLD RUSH
From California to Australia, explore the story of the 19th-century race to get rich
WHAT IF... ALFRED THE GREAT HAD LOST THE BATTLE OF EDINGTON?
PLUS Why did Britain have a three-day week? Who was the Somerton Man?

A GREED FOR GOLD

Your excellent Essential Guide to the Gold Rush (December 2022) was spoiled for me only by the assertion that they were attributable to 'white settler colonialism'.

I prefer to see the gold rushes as just another example of the human desire to get something for nothing as quickly as possible, and to own anything which others might consider luxurious and be envious of.

In Roman times, it was clothing dyed Tyrian purple; in 17th-century Europe, tulips were the must-have status symbol, with single bulbs selling for 14 times the annual income of a skilled worker; and in 1667, the Dutch were so keen to maintain their control over the sale of nutmeg that they gave away Manhattan. Elsewhere, desire to 'make a quick buck' in 1720 led to the notorious South Sea Bubble.

Over the years we have witnessed an insatiability for commodities such as sugar, salt, tea, coffee and tobacco. During World War II, nylon stockings were all the rage. Today, it might be the latest Christmas toy, trainers, mobile phones or computer games, and during a pandemic there will be a rush to empty supermarket shelves. It's not down to 'white settler colonialism'. It's a question of greed and the fear of being without.

Ian McDonald, by email

Dr Stephen Tuffnell, expert advisor to our Essential Guide to the Gold Rush, replies:

Thank you for writing in response to the Guide. Powerful patterns of consumption have undoubtedly driven commodity rushes throughout the past: be it for gold, guano or gutta percha. A distinction might be made, however, between metropolitan consumer desires and the processes of settler colonialism that marked gold rush societies on the periphery: the active and deliberate dispossession and violent removal (often unrestrained by the central government) of indigenous peoples from their lands to establish permanent sovereignty for incoming white settlement.

But it may also be profitable to view consumer desires as concurrent with these processes and connected to the profoundly different conceptions of space and place that typified the colonial encounter. Settlers derided indigenous land use as land wasted in contrast to land mobilised for progress (in this case, the extraction of gold). It was precisely these convictions about improvement and waste, 'primitive' and 'modern', that gave the gold rushes their explosive speed and intensity – and render them a particularly violent and consequential form of the phenomena of settler colonialism in history.

WHAT TIME OF DAY?

Earlier this year, you published a fact in your Q&A section about a man called Time of Day, who was born in Kent in 1899 (March 2022). He was a distant relative of mine and not the only person born in Hoo, Kent, to have this name. The first Time of Day, a blacksmith born in 1798, was the 12th and youngest child of Thomas and Elizabeth Day. The second Time of Day, an innkeeper, was the fourth child of George and Mary Day, born in 1833 and was no doubt named after the original, the name now being well known in Hoo. I would think he was the only person allowed to shout "Time!" when drinking was to end in his pub.

The third Time of Day, a carpenter, is the man mentioned in your Q&A section and he was the great-nephew of the second Time of Day. He moved away from Hoo and went to live in Worthing, West Sussex. From this point on, he is referred to as Time O Day. Clearly a name such as Time of Day was the cause of too much ribaldry in a place not accustomed to it!

Margaret Spiller, Surrey

CORRECTIONS

• In the TV & Radio pages of our September 2022 issue, we incorrectly stated that the attack on Pearl Harbor took place on 7 June 1941. This should, of course, have read 7 December 1941.

ALAMY X2

NEXT ISSUE

··· ON SALE 28 DECEMBER ···

THE CRIMEAN WAR

Discover the brutal conflict that set the stage for World War I and revolutionised warfare – from the work of Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale to the Charge of the Light Brigade

PLUS... A GLOBAL HISTORY OF TATTOOING THE LOST STORY OF A DEAF MAN FREED FROM SLAVERY **ELIZABETH BÁTHORY: THE 'BLOOD COUNTESS'** SEVEN THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT COFFEE **WHAT IF... BRITAIN HAD LOST THE FALKLANDS WAR?** AND MORE...

CROSSWORD WINNERS

The three lucky winners of the prize crossword in issue 112 are as follows:

E Cadwallader, Lincolnshire
J Quinn, London
S Smith, West Sussex

Congratulations! You've each won a copy of *Tudors in Love* by Sarah Gristwood.

We will post your prizes out as soon as possible.

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BBC HISTORY REVEALED

ISSUE 115 – CHRISTMAS 2022
BBC History Revealed is published by Immediate Media Company London Limited under licence from BBC Studios who help fund new BBC programmes

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Basic annual subscription rates
UK £64.87 **Eire/Europe** £67.99
ROW £69.00

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ARRESTING IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE PAST

THE GODFEATHER c1920s

The US prohibition of alcohol (1920–1933) gave rise to a constellation of criminal activities, such as bootlegging, prostitution and racketeering. Chicago became a magnet for such vice, which local mobsters like Giuseppe 'Diamond Joe' Esposito (*pictured*) sought to exploit. Often seen sporting expensive gems (hence his nickname), Esposito became a notorious figure, offering protection to members of Chicago's Italian-American criminal fraternity while serving as an alderman for the city's 19th ward. We don't know why the mobster was photographed on a rooftop with a pair of pigeons (it may have been part of a political stunt), but we do know how he met his end. In 1928, Esposito was killed in a drive-by shooting, likely on the orders of his rival, Al Capone.

GETTY IMAGES

This was Sylvia's promise to you...

A generation ago, a woman named Sylvia made a promise. As a doctor's secretary, she'd watched stroke destroy the lives of so many people. She was determined to make sure we could all live in a world where we're far less likely to lose our lives to stroke.

She kept her promise, and a gift to the Stroke Association was included in her Will. Sylvia's gift helped fund the work that made sure many more of us survive stroke now than did in her lifetime.

Sylvia changed the story for us all. Now it's our turn to change the story for those who'll come after us.

Stroke still shatters lives and tears families apart. And for so many survivors the road to recovery is still long and desperately lonely. If you or someone you love has been affected by stroke – you'll know just what that means.

But it doesn't have to be like this. You can change the story, just like Sylvia did, with a gift in your Will. All it takes is a promise.

You can promise future generations a world where researchers discover new treatments and surgeries and every single stroke survivor has the best care, rehabilitation and support network possible, to help them rebuild their lives.

Big or small, every legacy gift left to the Stroke Association will make a difference to stroke survivors and their families.

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The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789).
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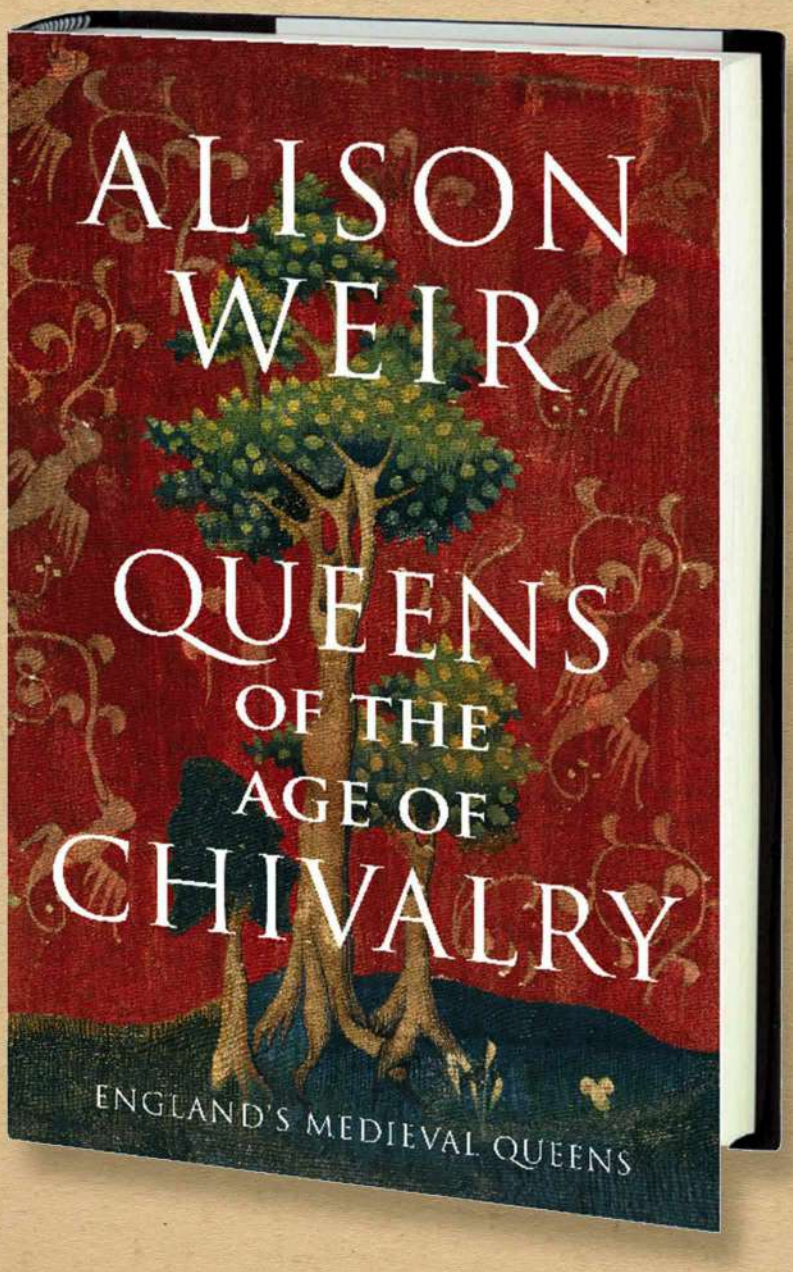
Stroke Association

VINTAGE

Discover the extraordinary real lives of England's Plantagenet queens



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